

Staffordshire

ISSUE 459 APRIL 2025

What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

staffordshirewhatson.co.uk



Saturday 19 April - Tamworth Castle Grounds
See St. George, the dragon, medieval joust, encampment, falconry and more...

FREE EVENT

St George's Day Extravaganza!



www.visittamworth.co.uk

Tamworth Castle Grounds, Holloway, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 7NA

inside:

GOTHIC HORROR

Bram Stoker's Dracula pays a visit to Lichfield Garrick



ICE CREAM SELLER

dessert spoons at the ready as Cinderella is reimaged



EASTER EVENTS

family-friendly holiday fun across the region



 gatehouse theatre

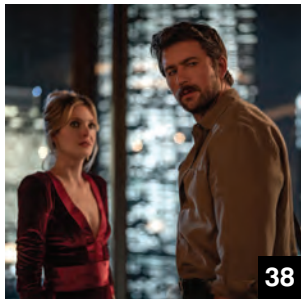
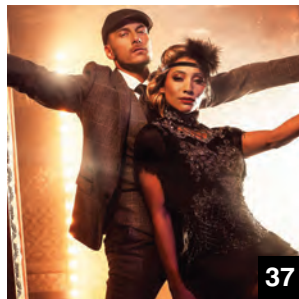
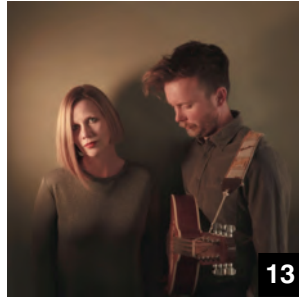
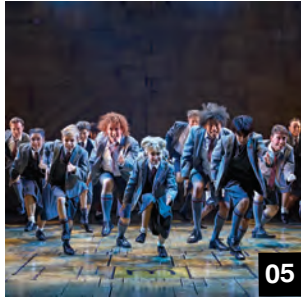
HAMLET

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What's On

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Ikon's floating art school heads to the Potteries...

Birmingham art gallery Ikon's famous Slow Boat is heading for the Potteries. A heritage narrowboat which has been converted into a 'floating art school', Slow Boat is led by the Ikon Youth Programme and aims to introduce young people (aged from 16 to 21) to the region's arts & crafts heritage. Creative sessions involve different making practices, including ceramics, printmaking, glass, photography, silversmithing and textile weaving. Slow Boat's springtime programme of activity is focused on engaging young people living in the North Staffordshire area of the region. The programme includes a free and open-to-everybody creative workshop on Saturday 10 May, taking place at Etruria Trent & Mersey Canal Visitor Moorings in Stoke-on-Trent.

Acid jazz pioneers Brand New Heavies in the forest

The Brand New Heavies are to perform in Cannock Chase Forest this summer as part of Forestry England's long-established summer concert series, Forest Live. The acid jazz pioneers will kickstart the party on Wednesday 25 June as support to legendary disco icons Nile Rodgers & CHIC. To find out more and book tickets, go to the website at forestlive.com



Two Wicked singalongs at Dudley Town Hall

Dudley Town Hall will host two special singalong showings of hit film musical Wicked on Friday 25 April (3pm and 7:30pm). Commenting on the news, Rupert Knowlden, borough halls manager, said: "This is a great opportunity for families to enjoy their favourite film in a whole new light. We will have the lyrics on the screen for people to sing along to, and an exclusive singalong gift bag for all. Fancy dress is very much encouraged!" Tickets can be booked at boroughhalls.co.uk

TV show's ceramics on display at Gladstone

To mark Stoke-on-Trent's 100th anniversary, the city's historic Gladstone Pottery Museum is currently hosting an exhibition of ceramics crafted by the potters in episode seven of The Great Pottery Throw Down. The Channel Four series challenged the potters to design and create bird baths that honour Stoke's six towns. Each piece reflects the area's rich industrial heritage, vibrant green spaces and historic waterways. The exhibition is available to view until Friday 24 October.

Shrewsbury Museum family special at twilight

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery is staying open until 9pm on Friday 4 April, to provide families with the chance to enjoy a twilight event inspired by the venue's currently-on-display Sun & Fire exhibition. Visitors can try their hand at a selection of ancient crafts, enjoy a storytelling session and experience the primal sounds of the Meole Brace Drummers. To find out more, visit shropshiremuseums.org.uk

The Fratellis to headline Heal's Saturday night

The Fratellis will appear at Heal Festival when it makes a welcome return to Shrewsbury's West Mid Showground in the autumn. The Glasgow indie rockers will headline the Saturday night of the three-day event, which also features multiple stages and arenas,

activities for all age groups, fairground attractions, street-food outlets and a wellness village. The festival runs from Friday 19 to Sunday 21 September. To find out more, visit the website at healfestival.co.uk



Hit spinetangler heading to Shrewsbury theatre

The Woman In Black will tour to Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn in the autumn. Stephen Mallatratt's stage adaptation of Susan Hill's bestselling novel stops off at the venue from Tuesday 30 September to Saturday 4 October. Tickets are available via the venue's website: theatresevern.co.uk



More dates for Elkie's farewell

Elkie Brooks' Long Farewell Tour is now even longer. The 80-year-old singer has added a host of new dates to her schedule, including the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Sunday 17 September and Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday 7 February 2026. Tickets are available via the website at elkiebrooks.com



Glow puppets at the Gatehouse

There's Easter-holiday family fun to enjoy at Stafford Gatehouse on Thursday 24 April, courtesy of the Puppet Spectacular Glow Show. The one-hour production features humour, music, glow-in-the-dark visuals and a cast of colourful characters. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit gatehousetheatre.co.uk

Shrewsbury Regatta returns

The annual Shrewsbury Regatta returns next month. Hosted by Pengwern Boat Club from its iconic boathouse on the banks of the River Severn, the event takes place on Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 May.



RSC's smash-hit musical to return to the Midlands in 2026

The Royal Shakespeare Company's much-loved *Matilda The Musical* is heading to Birmingham. The smash-hit production will make a stop-off at the city's Hippodrome theatre in the summer of 2026 (Wednesday 1 July - Sunday 2 August) as part of a brand-new tour which begins at *The Curve* in Leicester later this year. Commenting on the news, the show's composer & lyricist, Tim Minchin, said: "Our aim was to make a lovely little jewel of a musical for the

RSC's Courtyard Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. We never imagined that all these years later it would still be running in the West End, have been made into a film, and is now about to embark on its second tour of the UK & Ireland... "I'm deeply proud of *Matilda The Musical*, and every single talented person who continues to work on it with passion and enthusiasm." Visit birminghamhippodrome.com to purchase tickets for the show.



Shropshire debut for young pianist

Fourteen-year-old Russian concert pianist Elisey Mysyn will make his full British debut at Walcot Hall near Bishop's Castle on Saturday 3 May. Arriving in Shropshire from Singapore, Elisey's programme will include ballet music by Tchaikovsky and works by Mozart, Schumann, Liszt and Prokofiev. Tickets can be purchased at walcothallevants.com

Street-dance stars Diversity to bring Soul to Midlands venues next year

Street-dance superstars Diversity will be making two Midlands stop-offs when they hit the road early next year with brand-new tour *Soul*. The 2009 Britain's Got Talent winners kickstart proceedings at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra from Wednesday 11 to Saturday 14 February. They then visit the Regent in Stoke-on-Trent on Thursday 5 & Friday 6 March. For further information and tickets, visit tix.to/diversity



Enjoy wonderful walks around Ironbridge Gorge

The annual Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival returns next month for the 20th year. The 2025 edition of the event takes place from Saturday 3 to Sunday 11 May and features more than 60 walks in and around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. Whilst all walks are completely free, booking is essential, as numbers are limited. Well-behaved dogs are welcome on some walks, but organisers advise interested parties to check before booking. To find out more and book your place, visit the website ironbridgewalking.co.uk



Stoke Rep players take on The Magnificent Seven

Stoke Rep Players are back in action this month, presenting a new production of the Catherine O'Reilly & Tim Churchill play, *The Magnificent Seven* (Stoke Rep Theatre, Wednesday 8 - Saturday 12 April). Set in 1994, the story follows a group of spirited World War Two veterans, who, confined in a Brighton nursing home, hatch a plan to break free and head to Normandy to mark the 50th anniversary of the D-Day landings... For further information and to book tickets, visit the company's website at stokerep.co.uk



National Trust reinstates historic glasshouse

Work to rebuild a historic garden feature is under way at a Shropshire heritage site. The original glasshouse in the walled garden at Benthall Hall, located just a stone's throw from Broseley, is being reinstated this spring by the National Trust.

06 whatsonlive.co.uk



Slava's Snowshow back in the Midlands this autumn

The award-winning Slava's Snowshow will return to the Midlands in the autumn. The hit production, which bagged an Olivier Award for Best Entertainment way back in 1998, is described by its official publicity as 'a visual and musical extravaganza, offering a dream-like vision that overflows with

theatrical magic and humorous antics'. The show stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra from Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 November as part of a UK tour. To find out more and book tickets, visit the production's website at slavasnowshow.com

Exhibition showcases community dance

A new exhibition showcasing community dance across Staffordshire and the wider West Midlands is showing at The Brewhouse Arts Centre in Burton upon Trent until Saturday 26 April. Entitled *Why I Dance*, the display features films and



photographs showcasing the work of numerous contemporary dance groups in the region - in particular those which cater for adults with learning disabilities. The exhibition has been organised by That! Dance, an inclusive dance group based in Staffordshire which formed as part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games culture programme. To find out more about the organisation, check out [instagram.com/itsthatdance](https://www.instagram.com/itsthatdance)

Two Children's Laureates at Festival Of Brilliant

Two Children's Laureates - Frank Cottrell Boyce and Joseph Coelho - are among the creatives taking part in a celebration of children's books at Biddulph Old Hall on

Friday 11 (for schools) & Saturday 12 (for families) July.

Titled *The Festival Of Brilliant*, the event will feature readings, workshops, performances, talks, installations and activities 'to feed the imagination'. To find out more and purchase tickets (for the 12th), visit the event's website at festivalofbrilliant.org



Movie magic in the great outdoors at Himley Hall

A touring outdoor cinema is visiting Dudley's Himley Hall late next month. Adventure Cinema's three-day stop-off at the venue will comprise a singalong version of *The Greatest Showman* on Friday 30 May and screenings of *Shrek*, *Mamma Mia!* and *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* on Saturday the 31st. *The Gruffalo/Stick Man*, *Moana 2* and *Pretty Woman* all feature on the bill on Sunday 1 June. Tickets can be purchased via the website at adventurecinema.co.uk

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Natalie Tenenbaum
02 Apr | JBPS at Symphony Hall



Good Friday St Matthew Passion with Ex Cathedra
18 Apr | Symphony Hall



Pop in & try!

The Codfather
B:Eats at Symphony Hall:
11am-4pm Mon-Sat & pre-show



The 'Million Dollar Bash': Ashley Hutchings 80th Birthday Celebration
18 Apr | Town Hall



Gregory Porter
23 & 24 Apr | Symphony Hall



Guenter Steiner Live: Unfiltered
25 Apr | Symphony Hall



Kiell Smith-Bynoe & Friends: Koolhaas
25 Apr | Town Hall



Lionel: The Music of Lionel Richie
26 Apr | Town Hall



Top Gun: Maverick - In Concert
27 Apr | Symphony Hall



Just My Imagination: The Music of The Temptations
27 Apr | Town Hall



Anastacia: Not That Kind
28 Apr | Symphony Hall

bmusic.co.uk

Great Nights Out
start with **B:Music!**

Hollywood icon brings new tour to the Midlands

Hollywood film star Bill Murray is visiting Birmingham in the summer with his New Worlds tour. The Ghostbusters and Groundhog Day actor will appear at the city's Symphony Hall on Wednesday 25 June alongside cellist Jan Vogler, pianist Vanessa Perez and violinist Mira Wang.



To the accompaniment of the classically trained musicians, Bill will be singing songs and reading from American literary classics by authors including Mark Twain and Ernest Hemingway.

For more information about the show and to purchase tickets, visit the Symphony Hall website at bmusic.co.uk

Titty Trail times two!

Shropshire & Mid Wales charity Lingen Davies Cancer Fund is this year hosting two of its popular Titty Trail events, to promote a greater awareness of breast cancer and raise vital funds for life-saving services.

Commenting on the news, Naomi Atkin, chief executive officer at Lingen Davies, said: "We launched Titty Trail back in 2023.

Uniting cancer patients, survivors, and their loved ones, 250 participants walked 10 miles over the Shropshire Hills. It quickly became an annual fixture, and this year we're thrilled to be presenting two: one in South Shropshire and another in Mid Wales."

To find out more, visit tittytrail.co.uk



Wolverhampton Art Gallery receives funding

Wolverhampton Art Gallery has been awarded £1,695,758 to safeguard the building and its collections.

The cash, which comes from the Museum Estate & Development Fund, administered by Arts Council England, will be used to restore stonework, repair the roof and chimneys, and upgrade systems to enhance energy efficiency, sustainability and reliability.



New Vic Theatre to stage a festive-season fairytale

Staffordshire's New Vic Theatre will this Christmas stage a brand-new adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale adventure *The Little Mermaid*.

Showing at the Newcastle-under-Lyme venue from Friday 14 November to Saturday 24 January, the show sees New Vic Artistic Director Theresa Heskins and Vicki Dela Amedume (New Vic associate director and artistic director of contemporary circus company Upswing) once again teaming up.

The pair previously collaborated on critically acclaimed adaptations of Angela Carter's *The Company Of Wolves* and Hans Christian Andersen's *The Princess And The Pea*.

This new adaptation of *The Little Mermaid*, which combines 'contemporary circus with enchanting storytelling', is the next show to be produced as part of the New Vic's circus-theatre programme of work.

For more information and to book your seat, visit newvictheatre.org.uk

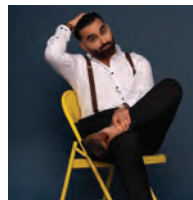
Makers Central returns to the NEC next month

Makers, hobbyists and artists from all over the world will be celebrating their passion for all things creative at Birmingham's NEC next month, when the Makers Central show returns to the venue on Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 May. Further information about the event is available by visiting the associated website at makerscentral.co.uk

Tez Ilyas joins line-up for town's comedy gala

Award-winning comedian Tez Ilyas is the latest addition to the line-up for the 2025 Shrewsbury International Comedy Festival (SICF) flagship gala show.

The highlight of SICF, the show will take place at the town's Theatre Severn venue on Sunday 13 July. The five-day festival - starting on Wednesday the 9th - will also include performances by other comedians at multiple venues throughout Shrewsbury. For ticket information, visit theatresevern.co.uk



Disney celebrated in Symphony Hall concert

A symphonic celebration of Disney music, animation and memories is coming to the Midlands early next year.

Disney In Concert: *The Sound Of Magic* - performed by the Novello Orchestra and featuring memorable songs and moments from some of the Mouse House's best-loved movies - will visit Symphony Hall in Birmingham on Saturday 21 February.

For tickets, visit disneytickets.co.uk

Chance to sponsor a seat at Shrewsbury cinema

New seating has been installed in Shrewsbury's Old Market Hall cinema, with the venue now inviting audience members to sponsor a seat.

As well as the seating, which comes complete with much-requested drinks holders on every armrest, the cinema has also invested in a state-of-the-art and 'significantly more eco-friendly' laser projector.

Anybody interested in sponsoring a seat should visit oldmarkethall.co.uk for more information.

WORLD CLASS ENTERTAINMENT

ATG TICKETS

Regent Theatre



A dance spectacular from Strictly sensation

Nikita Kuzmin – Midnight Dancer

Fri 2 May



The Story of the Dubliners

Seven Drunken Nights

Sat 3 May



Let's do the Time Warp again!

The Rocky Horror Show

Mon 5 – Sat 10 May



Flipping the script on the greatest love story ever told

& Juliet

Mon 12 – Sat 17 May



The improvised murder mystery

Murder, She Didn't Write

Sun 1 Jun



Step through the wardrobe to Narnia

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe

Tue 3 – Sat 7 Jun

Victoria Hall



It's not the Beatles but you simply won't believe it!

The Bootleg Beatles

Wed 9 Apr



A night of Meat Loaf Anthems

Meat Loaf by Candlelight

Sat 12 Apr



The Rod Stewart Story

Some Guys Have All the Luck

Sun 4 May



The ultimate retro concert!

80s Live

Fri 16 May



A DYING ART

Picture You Dead marks the seventh time a novel by bestselling author Peter James has been adapted for the stage. Who says crime doesn't pay?...

Peter James' popular DSI Grace novels might be set in the sunny south-coast location of Brighton, but they feature the dark and unsavory subjects of crime and murder. The books have not only been adapted into a number of ITV dramas, but also a series of hit stage plays. The seventh such adaptation, Picture You Dead, tours the UK this year. Bestselling author James here reveals why he thinks crime drama is so popular - and members of the cast offer some behind-the-scenes insights ahead of the show's visit to Shrewsbury at the end of the month...

Peter James has sold 23 million copies of his crime thrillers worldwide, with 21 consecutive UK Sunday Times number ones, as well as chart-toppers in Germany, France, Russia and Canada. He's also a New York Times best-seller - his murder-mysteries have been translated into 38 languages.

It's afforded him an enviable lifestyle. At the end of his 60s (he's now 76), he and second wife Lara moved to Jersey. "We're Brexiles," he says. "I wanted somewhere quiet; a bolt-hole in which to write."

He briefly returned to home turf to launch the stage adaptation of one of his thrillers, Picture You Dead, which is set in the veiled world of high-end art forgery.

Writing novels and writing stage plays are two very different disciplines - and that's quite apart from the fact it would be a torturous process, says Peter, to slim down 120,000 words or so into a 25,000-word script. With that in mind, step forward once again, Shaun McKenna - the writer who has adapted six of the thrillers for the stage. Picture You Dead - the last Grace book but three - adds to that number.

What made the novel such a pleasure to write in the first place, says Peter, was that he had the great good fortune to meet real-life forger David Henty.

"Back in 2015, I co-wrote a book, Death Comes Knocking: Policing Roy Grace's Brighton, with former Commander of Brighton & Hove Police, Graham Bartlett. It was Graham who introduced me to Henty."

Twenty years earlier, Henty had been a highly successful passport forger, specialising in fake watermarks. When the police eventually kicked in the door of the forgery factory, Henty was arrested, along with his co-conspirators, and subsequently sentenced to five years in prison. It was to be the very making of him.

His relatively harmless white-collar crime meant he had a pretty easy time of it inside - where he discovered that his skill stretched beyond passport fraud. He has the rare gift of being able to copy the work of any painter, from Fragonard to Caravaggio, from Van Gogh to Rembrandt, from Picasso to modern-day Banksy. And he can fool almost anyone that these paintings are genuine originals - leading to his current career as a copyist.

"It's what gave me the idea of the plot for Picture You Dead," says Peter.

The stage version stars Peter Ash as forger Dave Hegarty. Peter is fresh from his memorable and moving portrayal of Paul Foreman, wasting away from Motor Neurone Disease in Coronation Street, for which he won various awards, including the 2024 National Television Award for Best Serial Drama Performance.

He's bearded these days ("I had to be clean-shaven in Corrie") but he still gets recognised when he's out and about, "even if I'm wearing a baseball cap and glasses". He's not complaining, though: "It was a privilege to play that part, and to help educate the public about that cruel disease."

He was in the soap for six years in total and is touring the UK until mid-May, when he'll bow out to shepherd his 15-year-old son through his GCSEs. The tour continues until July.

The role of the (fictional) forger in Picture You Dead intrigues him: "He's obviously very talented and passionate about his art. He's got a history with Roy Grace, from when he used to forge passports."

With big money changing hands, there's certainly going to be skullduggery along the way. And fisticuffs, too, maybe? "I must be careful what I reveal, but yes, I think we can say there'll be thrills and spills. It's going to be quite a ride."

For actor George Rainsford, who played Ethan Hardy in Casualty for nine years, this will be his second turn round the block - he played Roy Grace in the UK tour of Wish You Were Dead in 2023.

"It was great fun doing it the first time," he says, "but a bit different, because you saw Roy and his wife on holiday with their toddler in France. He was out of his comfort zone."

"In Picture You Dead, he's back in Brighton, at work and doing what fans will recognise. He's heavily involved in a live case with all its twists and turns."

"Funnily enough, Picture You Dead came out in novel form when I was on the last tour as Roy Grace. I downloaded the audio version and listened to it when I was running."

So, could we be sitting here in two years' time with George about to tackle Roy for a

third time? "Never say never," he says, with a broad smile.

Fiona Wade plays Freya Kipling, who's married to Harry. They are an innocent couple who go to a car boot sale where they buy a painting that she's not keen on, but Harry likes. In time, it's discovered that there may be an original beneath the painting which, when exposed, could be worth a small fortune. Or is it a forgery?

Fiona's particularly pleased to have been cast in this production because it reunites her with George Rainsford, who played her husband last year in the hit tour of 2:22 A Ghost Story. The show marked her return to the theatre (she's appeared in Miss Saigon and The Far Pavilions) after more than a decade playing Priya Sharma in Emmerdale. She bowed out last year. "It was a long run, and it changed my life. But I wanted to take the gamble of seeing what else was out there, so I asked to be written out of the soap. I very much believe in the power of positive thinking, and my gamble has paid off."

The tour of Picture You Dead means Fiona will be away from home for the better part of five months. "My husband's an actor, currently on tour in Murder On The Orient Express." She and Simon Cotton met on Emmerdale. "We understand each other's crazy timetables."

"Touring in a production is a lovely way to see the UK," says Fiona. And she's a huge fan of crime novels. "So now, I'm going to start working my way through Peter James' long list of thrillers - beginning, of course, with Picture You Dead."

It seems appropriate that Peter himself, as the writer whose imagination has enthralled so many, gets the last word. So, what is it about whodunnits, in his opinion, that appeals to the reading - and theatre-going - public? "People love being scared," he says, "in a safe way. Bad things happen in the world, so it's satisfying to see them resolved. And there's no harm in throwing in a little gallows humour along the way."

.....

Picture You Dead shows at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn from Tuesday 29 April to Saturday 3 May



THE MAKINGS OF A MURDERER

The UK's top true crime theatre tour with former police detective Colin Sutton
Saturday 5 April



THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD

A spellbinding night of music celebrating the most beloved musicals of all time
Friday 11 April



ANDRE RIEU

Cinema special celebrating the 75th birthday of the legendary King of the Waltz
Sunday 13 April



MICK MILLER

An audience with the comedy legend featuring a full stand-up set plus interview
Thursday 17 April



WICKED SING-ALONG

Gather your friends and join us for a truly magical, unforgettable screening event
Friday 25 April



THE HAUNTING OF BLAINE MANOR

Award-winning, thrilling haunted house thriller written and directed by Joe O'Byrne
Saturday 26 April



THE KILKENNYS

Ireland's best international folk group return with another energetic performance
Saturday 26 April



VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR SHOW

Vibrant and critically acclaimed production celebrating Eric Carle's adored classics
Friday 2 - Saturday 3 May



WONDERS OF OUR UNIVERSE

A visually stunning afternoon of cosmic exploration set to inspire minds of all ages
Sunday 4 May



CRAIG REVEL HORWOOD

A fab-u-lous night celebrating the release of the Strictly Judge's debut solo album
Friday 9 May



THE 80s SHOW

A spectacular journey through the most unforgettable hits that defined a generation
Friday 16 May



THE SMOOTH ROCK SHOW

The definitive and truly jaw-dropping tribute to the legendary masters of Yacht Rock
Saturday 17 May

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Dudley Town Hall - Stourbridge Town Hall - Halesowen Town Hall

See website for full line-up

SHREWSBURY FOLK FESTIVAL 22-23-24-25 AUG 2025

- Levellers
- Oysterband
- Skerryvore
- Natalie MacMaster & Donnell Leahy
- Holy Moly & The Crackers
- El Pony Pisador
- Dougie MacLean
- Judie Tzuke
- Mad Dog Mcrea
- Blazin' Fiddles
- Jim Moray
- Moonlight Benjamin
- 9Bach
- Kezia Gill
- The Henry Girls
- Melrose Quartet
- The Bar-Steward Sons of Val Doonican
- This Flight Tonight - The Songs of Joni Mitchell
- The Fontanas
- The Laurettes
- Morganway
- Rainbow Girls
- Kim Carnie
- Project Smok
- Hannah Rarity
- The Ayoub Sisters
- Touki
- Sam Kelly & Jamie Francis
- Cajun Roosters
- Naomi Bedford & The Ramshackle Band
- Naragonia Quartet
- Dan Owen
- Heron Valley
- Malin Lewis
- Firelight Trio
- Sarah Jane Scouten & more!

Children's Festival @ndemonium!

- Ceilidhs
- Morris & dance teams
- Workshops
- Singarounds & sessions
- Real ale, wine & cocktail bars
- Craft fair
- Food village
- Camping & glamping

refolkus Youth Festival

Day & Weekend Tickets

shrewsburyfolkfestival.co.uk

the brewhouse arts centre & café bar

Brewhouse Arts Centre
Union Street,
Burton upon Trent
DE14 1AA

BOOK ONLINE AT
www.brewhouse.co.uk

Box Office & Information: 01283 508100

<p>9 April, 7pm Burton Collaborative Arts Festival Tickets: £5-8</p>	<p>22 - 26 April Little Theatre Company: Little Shop of Horrors Tickets: £15-17</p>
<p>11 April, 7.30pm Sensation ABBA Tribute Band Tickets: £19</p>	<p>2 May, 8pm Brew-ha-ha-house Comedy Tickets: £14</p>
<p>12 April, 7.30pm The Searchers & Hollies Experience Tickets: £20</p>	<p>6 & 7 May, 7pm Burton and South Derbyshire College: Shrek The Musical Tickets: £10</p>
<p>16 April, 11.30am & 2.30pm The Great Baldini The Family Magic Show Tickets: £7-9</p>	<p>27 & 28 May You Choose Tickets: £13 Under 12: £10 Group of 4: £42</p>

Live music from across the region...

Megson

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 5 April

Since releasing first album *On The Side* in 2004, husband & wife team Stu and Debbie Hanna have developed an enviable reputation on the English folk-music circuit. Hailed as fresh and innovative (a description which is hardly surprising, given that Debbie is classically trained and Stu's a former punk!), the multi-award-winning duo specialise in self-composed melodies which bring together intimate harmony singing and multi-instrumental acoustic playing.



Ian Prowse & Amsterdam

Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury, Fri 25 April

Frontman of Liverpool pop/rock group Amsterdam, singer-songwriter Ian Prowse previously played with Cheshire indie rockers Pele, whose debut offering, *Fireworks*, was released to great critical acclaim...

Ian and Amsterdam are visiting Shrewsbury this month as part of their *Does This Train Stop On Merseyside* 20th anniversary tour.



Blossoms

The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton, Fri 18 April

Blossoms burst onto the UK music scene with the release of their self-titled debut album in 2016. First single *Charlemagne* was named BBC Radio One's track of the day and

featured on Spotify's Spotlight On 2016 list. The boys have since released four more albums, including last autumn's *Gary*, which became their fourth chart-topping record.

They're visiting the region this month in the company of special guests Nieve Ella and Florence Road.

Emilia Quinn

Fulford Village Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 13 April

Powerful, gritty, and ranging almost three octaves, Emilia Quinn's raw, soulful and classically trained vocals have played a major role in getting her noticed. Her output - from badass anthems to heartfelt ballads - sees her blending Americana, blues and rock to excellent effect, while her passion for storytelling ensures her emotionally charged music resonates deeply with her ever-growing fanbase.

Emilia is joined for this Potteries stop-off by country/Americana singer-songwriter Kier.

Newton Faulkner

The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 27 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 30 April

Newton Faulkner's penchant for tapping and hitting his guitar has certainly helped him stand out from the crowd - as has his undoubted talent as a musician. One of the most successful UK singer-songwriters of the 21st century, Newton cites Del Amitri, Tom Waits, Stevie Wonder, The Rolling Stones and James Brown among the many and varied performers to have influenced his music. He's visiting the Midlands this month with his *Feels Like Home* Tour 3.

The Superskas

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 25 April

Wolverhampton band The Superskas perform a catalogue of hits from the golden ages of Trojan ska and 2-Tone, covering songs from original pioneers including Toots & The Maytals, Desmond Dekker, The Specials, Madness and The Selecter. Counting among their career highlights live collaborations with Damon Albarn, Dave Wakeling, Ranking Roger and The Beat, the band are using this month's Wolverhampton gig to celebrate their 20th anniversary, and will be joined on the night by a number of former members.





LIFE OF BRYAN

Bryan Adams talks about doing what he does best
and doing the best he can...

Fifty years into his musical career, Canadian rocker Bryan Adams is still going strong, with an arena tour and a new album on the way. "What else am I gonna do?" he asks What's On...

Readers of a certain vintage will doubtless find it hard to digest the fact that Bryan Adams is now 65, or that he's been in the music business for half a century.

By way of mitigation, the raspy-voiced rocker started young. He bought his first electric guitar at the age of 10, was performing in bands by the time he was 15, signed his first record deal at 18, and released his debut album when he was 20.

That was in 1980, and the next couple of decades saw his career skyrocket. A conveyor belt of hit singles included Run To You, Somebody, Summer Of 69, All For Love (with Sting and Rod Stewart), When You're Gone (with Mel C) and of course (Everything I Do) I Do It For You, which spent 16 weeks at number one in the UK. That song alone sold a staggering 15 million copies worldwide, with Adams' total album sales now close to 100 million.

It was an incredible era, but the softly spoken Canadian admits much of it is now a blur. "It was such a big touring time for us," he says. "We did thousands of gigs, but I don't remember a lot of it. If it hadn't been for videos, I don't think I'd remember any of it. I wonder if it's just because your brain only has the capacity to store a certain amount of information, and the rest of it falls by the wayside."

The singer's profile might have dipped in the subsequent decades - like many other rock acts from the era - but falling by the wayside was never likely to happen, not least because Adams has kept writing (including a Pretty Woman musical), recording and performing live throughout.

The tour for his last album, So Happy It Hurts, spanned three years and 16 countries, wrapping in Australia in February, and after what seems like an indecently brief pause, he's already back on the road. After squeezing in a few shows in Las Vegas in March ("to keep my agent happy"), his upcoming UK tour kicks off another lengthy trek round the globe. What on earth keeps his foot so hard on the gas?

"I don't really think about it - I just keep going. I run the ideas past my band and make sure they're okay to do the work. We take a break, see our families and then go back out. I was saying to Keith [Scott, his long-term

sidekick and guitarist] the other day - what else are we gonna do? I love what I do, and to be fair, for example, our Australian tour was the biggest tour of Australia we've ever done. It was absolutely massive, and we could've played another week if we'd known it was gonna go so well."

The latest tour is ostensibly to promote new album Roll With The Punches, although the LP won't actually hit the shops or streaming services until September. Instead, Adams plans to drip-feed individual tunes to audiences over the next few months - although he insists the live shows won't be dominated by tunes people don't know.

"You've gotta play the songs that people love - that's the whole point of being on tour. Then you pepper it with a couple of new ones if they go over well. So far, Roll With The Punches is going over really well, so we'll keep it in there."

The album's title track already sounds like a classic Adams rocker. The positive reception, and success of the recent shows, sees him on an upward curve after a few tough years during which he lost his record deal and parted company with his long-term manager. He now manages himself, runs his own record label (the sarcastically titled Bad Records) and is a lot happier - and less frustrated - as a result.

"I'm completely independent now, and it's such an amazing thing. For me, there's no point having a record deal. A few years ago, I went in to see a big label, as I had this album, Get Up, that I'd done with Jeff Lynne. I was super excited about it, but the record company's head of PR just looked at me and said 'It might be a great record, but I wouldn't know what to do with you.'"

There'll be no such conundrum when Roll With The Punches is released on Bryan's own label. The song's title is all about carrying on in the face of adversity.

"I think it's timely in the sense that there's all kinds of things happening in the world - for example, the Americans going after Canada," he starts, before diverting to more generic, as well as personal, concerns. "People are always going to try and drag you down, but you've just gotta get back up and live another day. Over the last few years, I've had my own ups and downs - getting dropped by my label, forming my own record company,

being an independent artist and other things associated with my business going back a few years. So a lot of it comes from this new-found independence. Nothing's gonna get me down."

Bryan has initially chosen to move forward by looking back. The new label's first release was newly recorded versions of two songs he wrote when he was 21... for Kiss. Rock And Roll Hell and War Machine appeared on the glam rock band's 1982 album, Creatures Of The Night, and helped give him the confidence to write with and for other artists. As well as delving into the archives for new material, he also released live versions of three of his early albums, all recorded during a three-night residency at the Albert Hall in 2024.

"It's been really fun to look at the past and try to find ways to bring it into the future. At the same time, the ideas don't stop coming - I still write songs, and I'm happy to put those out as well."

Whether any of the songs turn out to be hits seems largely inconsequential. That's partly because Bryan is happy to still be doing what he loves, but also because he knows he's unlikely to get played on the radio - something that really gets the bee flying round his bonnet.

"I think the record business is quite ageist, really - once you're out, you're not allowed back in. I could put out Summer Of 69 now and it wouldn't get played. Although thinking about it, it didn't get played at the time either!

"There's just a load of gatekeepers now that don't let certain things get played on the radio. One of the songs on Get Up was called Go Down Rocking, which is kind of my *raison d'être* - I don't give a sh*t what's gonna happen with all the different types of music that are out there; I'm just gonna do what I do best, and that's rock out.

"Believe me, I have no expectations about any of this - for the tour, for the music. I'm just doing what I do and doing the best I can."

.....
Bryan Adams plays Birmingham's bp pulse LIVE on Sunday 18 May

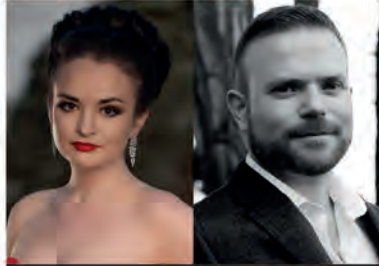


Lunchtime Music



Mondays at 1.05pm

Poulenc: La Voix Humaine



3 Apr

A Laugh Supreme
With Maria Shehata,
Eric Rushton and Alex Milner
& The Aidan Pope Quartet



11 Apr

Constest featuring Year of the
Dog & Karate Bandana



12 Apr

Neil Cowley Trio



23 Apr

Quatuor Bozzini



1 May

Global Traditions: Track Dogs &
Banter



9 May

Dido and Aeneas & Fêtes
Galante



12 - 14 June

Rachmaninoff's Symphonic
Dances



20 June

Fanna-Fi-Allah's 25th
Anniversary World Tour



26 June

Max ZT & Dan Whitehouse:
Ten Steps



29 June

RBC Folk Ensemble



4 July

Classical music from across the region...



Image © Todd Rosenberg

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 4 April

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic - the UK's oldest professional symphony orchestra - has been at the heart of the city's cultural life since 1840, each season performing around 70 concerts at venues across Liverpool, including its two cathedrals.

The orchestra's visit to the Potteries early

this month sees them performing under the baton of Erina Yashima (pictured), presenting a programme of music that features Humperdinck's Prelude to Hansel & Gretel and Dvorak's New World Symphony. Sandwiched between the two, soloist Anna Tsybuleva plays Grieg's famous Piano Concerto.

Carducci Quartet

St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury, Fri 4 April

Performing around 100 international concerts each year, Carducci are widely considered to be one of the most successful string quartets in the business, garnering lavish praise wherever they play. This latest Shropshire Music concert sees them presenting two hugely popular chamber works: Schubert's Octet in F Major, D803 and Mozart's Clarinet Quintet in A Major, K581. The quartet are joined for the occasion by clarinetist Julian Bliss.



Birmingham Bach Choir

Lichfield Cathedral, Sat 5 April

"Bach's B Minor Mass is one of the greatest works of the human mind," says Birmingham Bach Choir's conductor, Paul Spicer. "It is at the pinnacle of his achievement, which places it as high as we can measure greatness. The range of moods and emotions Bach covers in this huge work see us revelling in some of the most beautiful aria-like movements, such as the Agnus Dei, and at the other end of the spectrum, positively dancing with joy and excitement, like the opening of the Gloria, with everything in between and beyond. "We are joined for this concert by a wonderful period instrument orchestra and some truly international soloists, including our patron, Roderick Williams."



Halesowen Orchestra

Cradley Heath Salvation Army Church, Sat 5 April

The Halesowen Orchestra has been described as one of the town's hidden jewels - a description with which the ensemble's many supporters would no doubt wholeheartedly agree.

Founded in 1986, the amateur group of musicians meet once a week to practise a wide and varied repertoire of works by some of the world's greatest classical composers.

This month's concert, titled Witches And Wizards, features, among other works, Dukas' The Sorcerer's Apprentice, Holst's Uranus The Magician from The Planets, and John Williams' Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban Suite.

Ex Cathedra - Bach: St Matthew Passion

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 18 April

A favourite at Easter, Bach's dramatic telling of the Passion of Christ continues to be one of classical music's most profound experiences. Sung in German with English surtitles, St Matthew Passion is here performed by Ex Cathedra's choir & baroque orchestra and Academy of Vocal Music, coming together under the direction of conductor Jeffrey Skidmore. "Education and participation are central to our work," explains Jeffrey, in talking about the concert. "The traditional Good Friday Bach Passion in Symphony Hall has evolved into a powerful and poignant opportunity for 'historical' participation. "This brings all the elements of our work together through a liturgical reconstruction similar to that which might have been heard in the St Thomas Church in Leipzig in the 18th century [where the earliest verified performance of the work took place, on Good Friday in 1727]."



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Comedy previews from across the region...

Kurtis Conner

Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 10 April

Life is very much sunny-side-up for Kurtis Conner at the moment. With millions of subscribers to his YouTube channel, a hugely popular podcast, and sold-out signs going up at gigs across the globe, there's little wonder the Canadian funnyman has been hailed 'one to watch' by Variety. Peddling an often absurdist style of humour, Kurtis is visiting Birmingham this month with The Goodfellow World Tour, a show which he's promising is chock-a-block with his freshest and funniest material. "There's still a part of me that's like, all these people are just here by accident - they don't mean to be here," the 30-year-old comic told themudmag.com, in contemplating the ever-increasing popularity of his stand-up shows. "It's weird because I feel like I don't do anything to deserve it - but they're there, so it's really cool."



Shaparak Khorsandi

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Fri 11 April; Norbury Theatre, Droitwich, Sat 31 May; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 12 June

A regular contributor to radio and television programmes, Iranian-born comedian Shaparak Khorsandi describes herself as a 'spit and sawdust' stand-up comic, happily pulling on her wellies and trudging through muddy fields to perform at any and every music festival that boasts a comedy tent. She visits the region this month with latest show Scatterbrain.



Harry Hill

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Wed 9 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 26 April; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 27 April; Malvern Theatres, Wed 7 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Fri 16 May

"Join me on my Diamond Jubilee lap of honour," says Harry Hill, "as I celebrate 60 glorious years of fun, laughter and low-level disruption."

"Marvel! As I offer new insights into the hot topics of the day, such as the demise of the SCART lead, the 'culture wars', the differences between crab sticks and rhubarb and the origins of tiramisu!

"Plus, one lucky audience member will get to join me in a double act! "So get on board the laughter train!"



Andrew Lawrence

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 10 April & Thurs 8 May

It's fair to say that Andrew Lawrence's profile has been considerably raised by his involvement in various social-media controversies over the years.



On Facebook a decade ago, he accused television panel shows of indulging in "liberal back-slapping", claiming they featured "ageing, balding, fat men, ethnic comedians and women posing as comedians" who spent their time making jokes at the expense of Nigel Farage. More recently, he caused a stir when, following the defeat of the England football team in the final of the Euros - on penalties - he tweeted: "All I'm saying is the white guys scored." He then followed up with "I can see that this has offended a lot of people, and I'm sorry that black guys are bad at penalties." The controversy resulted in the Surrey-born comedian being dropped by his agent. He visits the Gatehouse this month and next with latest show Still On The Naughty Step.

Russell Kane

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sun 27 April; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 5 & Sat 6 December

Past publicity blurb for this fella said it all: "Strap in for some super-speed sunderings and inconvenient sociology in a show of self-

soiling merriment that will leave you with rickets."

In short, Russell Kane is a very funny man - and it's not just his publicist who thinks so. Russell has been drawing a crowd since bursting onto the scene more than 20 years ago, serving up liberal doses of humour at a frenetic pace.

The London-born comedian visits the Midlands this month with latest touring show HyperActive.



A Laugh Supreme

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Fri 11 April

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's Laugh Supreme evening makes a welcome pre-Easter return mid-month.

Described as 'a show bringing together the best of comedy and jazz in the incredible Eastside Jazz Club', the event's April edition features top-ranking Conservatoire jazz musicians the Aidan Pope Quartet and comedians Maria Shehata and Eric Rushton. Alex Milner is the host.





RAZZLE DAZZLE

Strictly's Janette Manrara talks about making her musical theatre debut as Roxie Hart in Chicago

Janette Manrara might be better known for her moves than her voice, given her status as one of the pros on Strictly Come Dancing, but this year sees her making the most of her musical theatre training. Janette is taking to the stage as Roxie Hart, one of the iconic leading ladies of Chicago, in a production which tours to the region this month and then returns in June. What's On spoke to her about her journey into the spotlight, finding a work/life balance, and All That Jazz...

Janette Manrara might be best known in the UK as a professional dancer on Strictly, appearing on the BBC series between 2013 and 2020, but now she's taking to the stage in a brand-new way. This year sees Janette making her professional musical theatre debut, playing the iconic character of Roxie Hart in a touring production of Chicago, which visits the Midlands this month.

"It's my musical theatre debut at 41," she says, "and I don't think I could have had a better role to kickstart this chapter of my career! I've been a fan of Chicago for many, many years. I've seen it many times and I've seen the film loads, as I'm sure many of us have. Roxie is such a fun leading lady to play because she's not your 'good girl next door' type at all. There's not many musicals where you get women misbehaving as leads, so it's really fun to play her."

The story centres around chorus girl Roxie, who is on trial for murder. With the help of flashy lawyer Billy Flynn, she steps into the media spotlight - vying for notoriety and celebrity with her fellow inmate Velma Kelly. "I'm so in love with the cast - they're all so talented. Djalenga Scott - DJ we call her for short - she plays my Velma. She's so talented, so good. I watch her from the side as she's doing her thing, and I'm just in awe of her. That's the same for the whole cast. Velma's a big part of the show for me; she's my partner in crime - quite literally."

With her husband and one-time Strictly co-star, Aljaž Škorjanec, Janette has a daughter, Lyra, born in 2023 - so the three of them will be hoping to find that ever-elusive work/life balance as she tours to 21 UK venues.

"That is the big puzzle of life, which I don't think there will ever be an answer for. I have to give massive, massive credit to Aljaž because, as my husband, as a man, and as my best friend, he's really going to hold the fort at home with Lyra. I'm just so grateful that we have that kind of relationship, where we really co-parent and we really are a team. I'm going to run home on my days off, straight after the show, so I can wake up in the morning at home as much as I possibly can. Aljaž and Lyra are going to come and visit me and stay with me some weeks. I said to him, I can't be more than a week away from her, so he's going to help make sure I spend as much time as I can with him and her.

"Having a partner like him by my side makes that work/life balance easier to accomplish. It's never easy. I had a big moment a few days

ago, just thinking 'Wow, I'll be putting Lyra to bed myself just once a week...' If you think about it, that's not a lot of nights that I get to put my own daughter to bed."

Janette is, of course, best known for her dancing, but some fans might be surprised to learn that her love of dance grew from a beginning in musical theatre. She began formal dance training at the age of 19, finding it was the skill at which she truly excelled. Returning to her roots as a 'triple threat' musical performer (dancing, singing and acting) is proving to be quite a journey down memory lane...

"I've always enjoyed musicals, and I started in musical theatre. I've done A Chorus Line, I've done Cats, I've done West Side Story, I've even done Chicago - but as a kid, as a teenager. Now, to be in my 40s doing my first-ever musical - it's such a full-circle moment for my career. I'm not Jeanette on stage, I'm Roxie. And the people around me - it's not Kevin Clifton, it's Billy Flynn; it's not DJ, it's Velma; it's not Brenda Edwards, it's Mama. To be in a room where all the people are going with you creatively, and not being afraid to be those characters, is so fascinating. You kind of feel like a kid again. You're playing 'imagination' - it's really cool to go back into that space, as an adult."

Preparing to play the role of Roxie has involved Janette looking back on previous renditions of the show - as well as looking forward to her own interpretation.

"I've been doing a lot of work with my acting coach - he's been incredible. We've dissected the script a hundred times and sat and watched different women play her throughout the years, finding inspiration from all the different, epic women who have been Roxie in the past, taking bits from each of them, and finding my own version of her. I think that's what's nice about Roxie Hart: you can play her your own way."

And while Janette is truly in her element when dancing, the sheer physicality of singing, acting and dancing in musical numbers has brought with it a few surprises. "I have to sing on a ladder, in Funny Honey, and the ladder is quite high. I have to climb the ladder, swing around the ladder, up and down the ladder, on music, on time; so that's interesting - and different!"

Outside of the performance world, last autumn saw the publication of Janette's first book: *Tiny Dancer, Big World*. The book is subtitled 'How to find fulfillment from the inside out' and provides an insight into

Janette's motivational and inspirational life lessons.

"I always really liked writing - but I didn't want to write a book unless I had something really meaningful to say. I was nearing the cusp of turning 40, I had just become a mother with Lyra, and I had done my wellbeing certification. I learned so much about the human mind and how it works, and I found that a lot of the tools that I learned really changed my approach to a lot of things in life - made me a calmer person. "A really special aspect of the book is that I wrote it with my sister. My sister's a writer - she kind of stepped in, and I would say that she zhuzhed it up a bit and gave it a twist here and there. I wrote the whole book myself, which I'm really proud of - not a lot of people do that. That process was gruesome, but so therapeutic at the same time. Lesly, my sister, helped make it that little bit more special and that little bit more beautiful to read."

And while she's got plenty on her plate for now, Janette hasn't closed the door on writing.

"I have a lot of life and career left to do before I can do the autobiography! But this book felt really nice because it's not about me. You learn about me in the book, but it's not *about* me; it's about the reader finding what works for them... I really hope it helps people."

With her musical theatre career now (high) kicking off in fine style, what's next for Janette? After all, it's quite unusual for a performer to make their debut playing one of theatre's great leading ladies...

"I said to my agent, if I'm starting at Roxie Hart, where do I go? Roxie is so iconic. I really enjoy the whole musical theatre process: learning a script; working on the singing; dancing, obviously, which is a huge passion of mine anyway. We'll see! There are so many great musicals out there - and there are also some really amazing new productions that I would love to go and watch, just to see which character pops out and makes me feel like I'd love to play it. There's so much new stuff happening in the world of musical theatre. Watch this space!"

.....
Chicago shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Monday 14 to Saturday 19 April, and the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 23 to Saturday 28 June



& Juliet Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 22 April - Sat 3 May; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 12 - Sat 17 May

Premiered in 2019 and featuring a string of hits by Max Martin, & Juliet tells an alternative story of Shakespeare’s famous heroine. In sharp contrast to the original tale, this one sees Juliet realising that she *can* survive without Romeo - a revelation that prompts her to set off on her own journey, both in love and life. The award-winning production, which has proved a massive hit across four continents, visits the Midlands this month with Wanted

band member and 2015 Strictly Come Dancing winner Jay McGuinness taking on the role of the Stratford bard himself. The part of Lance, meanwhile, will be played at the Hippodrome by TV presenter Dr Ranj Singh and at the Regent next month by Steps star Lee Latchford-Evans. Featured pop anthems include Britney Spears’ Baby One More Time and Katy Perry’s Roar, as well as chart toppers Since U Been Gone, It’s My Life and Can’t Stop The Feeling.

Ghost The Musical

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 1 - Sat 5 April

The ever-popular stage version of the award-winning film makes a welcome return to the region. For those not in the know, the production tells the story of a ghost named Sam, who, caught between this world and the next, is desperately attempting to communicate with girlfriend Molly, to warn her that she’s in mortal danger from his murderer... A timeless tale about the power of love - and beautifully blending the genres of romance and comedy - Ghost features The Righteous Brothers’ Unchained Melody and numerous songs co-written by Eurythmics’ Dave Stewart.



Tambo & Bones

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 9 - Sat 12 April

Slam poet & playwright Dave Harris has scored a significant hit with Tambo & Bones. A satire about America’s racial history, which also takes a peek into a wildly imaginative vision of the future, the show has not only been hailed a necessary piece of theatre but also ‘unpredictably bonkers’, ‘clever and prickly’ and every bit ‘as entertaining as it is unnerving’.



The story starts in the past and follows the fortunes of the initially down-on-their-luck title characters, a comedy double-act stuck in a minstrel show. But as time moves forward, Tambo & Bones’ fortunes radically change - and so too does the world around them... The Thursday performance of the production will be followed by a free-to-attend discussion hosted by theologian, broadcaster & documentary filmmaker Professor Robert Beckford.

Juliet

Tue 22 Apr - Sat 3 May

CAP

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

BRB2
Carlos Acosta's Ballet Celebration
DIAGHILEV AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN BALLET

Tue 6 May

Welsh National Opera

Peter Grimes
Britten

Sat 10 May

ACOSTA DANZA'S CUBAN ECLECTICO

Photo: Tati Ferrer

Tue 13 & Wed 14 May

CAP

DARA O BRIAIN
Re:Creation

Thu 15 & Fri 16 May

BRING THE LAUGHTER

Sat 17 May

NIKITA KUZMIN
MIDNIGHT DANCER

Sat 17 May

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT
LYRICS BY TIM RICE MUSIC BY ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

Tue 20 May - Sun 1 Jun

CAP R

Bibi Rukiya's Reckless Daughter

Thu 22 - Fri 23 May

Cruel Intentions
THE '90s MUSICAL

Tue 3 - Sat 7 Jun

CAP

RAMBERT DANCE IN PEAKY BLINDERS
THE REDEMPTION OF THOMAS SHELBY

Wed 11 - Sat 14 Jun

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Tina
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PRESENTED IN ASSOCIATION WITH TINA TURNER

Tue 17 - Sat 28 Jun

CAP



Dear Evan Hansen

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 1 - Sat 5 April; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 17 - Sat 21 June

Olivier, Tony and Grammy award-winning musical Dear Evan Hansen makes a welcome return this month.

Packed with some of the biggest musical theatre songs of the last decade, and here presented by Nottingham Playhouse, the hit show focuses on title character and high-school student Evan, a young man struggling with social anxiety disorder, who has a therapeutic and self-intended letter stolen by classmate Connor Murphy.

When Connor later dies by suicide, Evan inserts himself into the boy's past - a decision that soon leads to a series of lies and confrontational events...

"Ultimately, Dear Evan Hansen is about hope," says Ryan Kopel, who plays the title character. "No matter what you're going through, its message is that there is always someone to talk to and reasons why you should go on. That's what I'd like people to take away from the show."

Just Between Ourselves

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tues 29 April - Sat 3 May

Mention Alan Ayckbourn and a list of brilliant observational comedies springs readily to mind, the most famous among which - think Relatively Speaking, Absurd Person Singular, The Norman Conquests, Bedroom Farce - were penned in the 1960s and 70s. This particular offering sprang from his ever-fertile imagination way back in 1976 and is widely considered to be his most emotionally charged play. Bringing together five birthdays with two unhappy marriages and one possessive mother, Just Between Ourselves has been hailed a masterclass in suburban comedy and heartbreak. The production is presented by London Classic Theatre and forms part of the company's 25th-anniversary celebrations.



Ordinary Days: The Musical

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 9 - Sun 20 April

The success eight years ago of Ordinary Days' initial run at the Old Joint Stock Theatre no doubt played its part in the venue's decision to make the show its latest in-house production. Hailed by its publicity as 'a life-affirming and heartfelt musical that will leave audiences laughing one second and weeping uncontrollably the next', the show follows the fortunes of four young New Yorkers whose lives intersect as they search for fulfillment, happiness, love... and cabs.

The Pocket Dream

Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 24 April - Sat 3 May

Lichfield Garrick's next in-house production is this reworking of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Written by Elly Brewer & Sandi Toksvig - and first performed by Nottingham Playhouse more than 30 years ago - The Pocket Dream tells the story of a company of strolling players whose production of the bard's most popular comedy hangs in the balance. Can a motley crew of makeshift mechanicals possibly save the day?... The Garrick's longtime pantomime favourites, Sam Rabone and Ben Thornton - here reuniting far earlier in the year than

usual - are joined in the show by Joe Feeney. Joe starred alongside Sam and Ben in last Christmas' production of Jack And The Beanstalk, playing the character of the ne'er-do-well Luke Backinanger (geddit?).

Only Fools & Horses

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 12 April

A major hit in the West End, the stage-musical version of long-running BBC TV comedy series Only Fools And Horses will no doubt prove itself to be a nice little earner - as Del Boy himself might say - during its early-month run in Birmingham. Starring much-loved Fast Show and Gone Fishing comedian Paul Whitehouse - who's co-written the show - in the role of Grandad, the production not only features material from the television series but also boasts 'an ingenious script and 20 hilarious songs'.

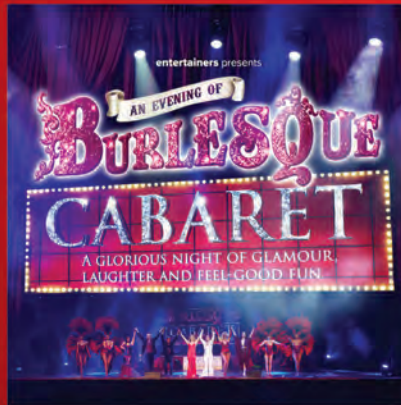


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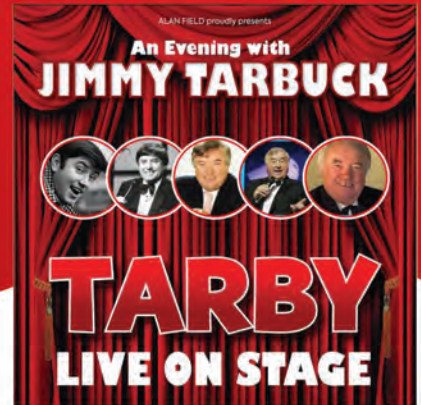
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Theatre previews from around the region



Kinky Boots

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 15 - Sat 19 April

The newly appointed manager of his late father's shoe factory in Northampton, Charlie Price has got some tough decisions to make as he attempts to save the ailing business. After a chance meeting with drag queen Lola, Charlie identifies a potentially lucrative niche market: creating footwear to cater for men who like to dress as women... A topical story about diversity and acceptance, Kinky Boots is based on the 2005 film of the same name and features music & lyrics by 80s pop star Cyndi Lauper. Expect a feelgood evening of catchy tunes, fierce anthems and warm-hearted humour. Strictly Come Dancing's Johannes Radebe stars as Lola.

Pig Heart Boy

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 2 - Sat 5 April; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 8 - Sat 12 April

Cameron wishes his life was all about having friends, going to school, and diving to the bottom of his local swimming pool. But it isn't. The 13-year-old desperately needs a heart transplant, and time is running out. When he's finally offered a new heart, he finds himself needing to choose how far he will go in order to get his life back...

Written by Malorie Blackman, the multi-award-winning author of Noughts And Crosses, Pig Heart Boy is here brought to life in a brand-new adaptation by Winsome Pinnock.



Edward II

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon,
until Sat 5 April

Edward II is perhaps best known for a scene in which the king is assassinated by having a red-hot poker thrust up his backside. But Christopher Marlowe's classic tale of love, lust and ambition has plenty to offer besides an eye-watering dose of fatal anal trauma. Here being presented by the Royal

Shakespeare Company, it tells the story of a young monarch who lets his passion for another man influence his every decision - even those which are concerned with the gravest matters of state...



A Matter Of Life And Death

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme,
until Sat 19 April

New Vic Artistic Director Theresa Heskins has adapted and directs this stage version of the much-loved 1941 film starring David Niven. The story's main character is World War Two pilot Peter Carter, who thinks he's about to meet his maker when his plane goes down just off the coast of England. Instead, he finds himself face-to-face with June, the American radio operator who kept him company on what he thought would be his final journey. Peter soon falls in love with her and looks ahead to a bright future - until, that is, a celestial entity makes contact to inform him that he should in fact have died in the plane crash...

Dracula

Lichfield Garrick, Wed 16 & Thurs 17 April;
Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Fri 18 & Sat 19 April

Bram Stoker's Dracula is best known from its many and varied cinematic incarnations - but as theatrical productions like The Woman In Black have ably illustrated, a spiningtling story of horror can work just as well on the stage as on the screen...

Cue, the critically acclaimed Blackeyed Theatre's brand-new adaptation, a production which imaginatively blends Victorian Gothic with the contemporary... The company has deemed the show suitable for audience members aged 11 upwards.



Cabin Fever

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 11 & Sat 12 April

The sky's the limit for Beth Miles and Aurelia Harris-Johnstone, who this month land their airborne comedy Cabin Fever in Coventry on the back of a host of positive reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe.



Promising to take turbulence to a whole new level, the uber-talented duo bring to life a planes-worth of passengers travelling from London Heathrow to Los Angeles, delving into various characters' back stories along the way. Given Cabin Fever's rapturous reception in the Scottish capital last summer, this could well be one flight you won't want to miss.



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CENTRE

Theatre for younger audiences



The Detective Dog

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 12 & Sun 13 April

Given the success of so many other stage adaptations of Julia Donaldson's hugely popular stories (see, for example, The Smartest Giant In Town elsewhere on this page), it's a real no-brainer to mount a live version of The Detective Dog. The canine sleuth of the title is Nell, whose detective skills are certainly not in question; whether it's finding a lost shoe or discovering who left an unpleasant 'surprise' on the new gravel pathway, her ever-sniffing nose is always hard at work. So when the books at her owner Peter's school disappear one morning, it isn't long before Nell is on the case and sniffing out the culprit!... Created with three- to seven-year-olds in mind, the show is being presented by Bristol-based Tiny & Tall Productions.

Horrible Histories: Terrible Tudors & Awful Egyptians

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 April

If you love the Horrible Histories series - and why the heck wouldn't you?! - then Terrible Tudors and Awful Egyptians are two shows well worth catching.

Audience members attending the former will find out all about the fate of Henry's headless wives and his punch-up with the Pope, while families checking out the latter will be asked whether they're ready to rumble with Ramesses and - somewhat more alarmingly - if they dare to enter through 'the gates of the afterlife'!... Both productions show on each of the three days - visit The Alexandra's website to check starting times.

Shark In The Park

Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sun 6 April

Nick Sharratt has illustrated hundreds of books, a significant percentage of which have been his own.



One of these is the hugely successful Shark In The Park!, a children's story about a young lad named Timothy who goes to his local park to try out his new telescope. While there, he thinks he spots a shark - and not just on one occasion either, but several times

in several places!... The popularity of the book prompted Nick to write and illustrate two follow-up offerings - Shark In The Dark! and Shark In The Park On A Windy Day!. All three stories are featured in this much-loved stage production from the highly rated Nonsense Room theatre company. The show is suitable for children aged two-plus.

Milkshake! Live On Holiday

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Tues 22 April; The Civic, Brierley Hill, Mon 26 May; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Wed 28 May; Malvern Theatres, Tues 29 July

The Milkshake! pals are heading off on holiday - and Midlands-based families are invited to join them for a fun-packed new adventure...

If you've watched the TV series and/or been to a previous live production, you'll already know what to expect from a Milkshake! show. If not, get ready for an event that promises lots of laughter, bucketloads of family fun, bags of audience participation and plenty of singing and dancing...

The Smartest Giant In Town

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 12 & Sun 13 April; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Wed 23 & Thurs 24 April

Fierylight & Little Angel Theatre are the creatives behind this stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved

story. The title character is George, a giant who decides his scruffy days are a thing of the past and buys himself some oversized clothes. But when he encounters various animals needing his assistance - and, more particularly, his newly purchased items of clothing - George soon realises that it isn't clothes that maketh the giant but rather a gargantuan sense of generosity and a colossal warm heart...



Bing's Birthday

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 12 April; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 23 & Thurs 24 April; Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 14 & Sun 15 June; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 1 & Wed 2 July

Bing's Birthday's promoters are confident that their brand-new show is a perfect 'first theatre trip' for pre-schoolers and their families. And why wouldn't they be, given that the production is awash with fun, laughter, music, puppetry and dressing-up?... Based on the animated CBeebies television series, the production runs for 70 minutes, including an interval.



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Theatre for younger audiences



Stories In The Dust

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sun 6 April; Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Mon 14 April; Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Tues 15 April; SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, Wed 16 April

Ideal for youngsters aged five to 12, *Stories In The Dust* follows the adventures of two travellers as they journey across a mysterious land in a contraption they've built themselves. As they go, they sing, play games and tell stories inspired by a collection of precious things they've gathered together from a time gone by. The pair are awash with ideas and full of hope - but they're also dangerously low on baked beans...

Wiltshire-based performers & theatre makers Iona Johnson and Anna Harriott here bring together live music and puppetry to present a play about the climate emergency.

Room On The Broom

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 23 - Sat 26 April

Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, the creators of *The Gruffalo* are the duo behind this 'spellbinding' tale of a witch who makes the mistake of thinking she can fit a daft dog, a beautiful bird and a friendly frog - as well as her own cat - on her broomstick without it snapping in two. And when a hungry dragon appears, things really start to hot up... Presented by Tall Stories theatre company.



Rude Science

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 19 April; Malvern Theatres, Fri 25 April; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Mon 21 July

As science shows go, BBC *Gastronaut Stefan Gates* is pretty darned certain that his *Rude Science* production is the most revolting in the whole wide world. And he could well be right, given that it involves enormous bottoms, pee-powered fireworks, fabulous fart machines and vast whoopee cushions! Science stunts and spectacular experiments abound in a show that promises to be both entertaining and educational. Suitable for children aged five and older.



Mিনny Stynker

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 27 April

A bedroom becomes a forest and a school turns into a solar system in this Soap Soup Theatre family production. Telling the story of Kit - a child living in a strange new city - and celebrating the magic of creativity and the imagination. The show is ideal for children aged between three and eight.



The Family Magic Show

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Wed 16 April; Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 15 June; Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Sun 22 June; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Sat 25 October

Those unfamiliar with *The Great Baldini* are advised to imagine an amalgamation of arch Bond villain Ernst Blofeld and legendary magician/comedian Tommy Cooper. The self-proclaimed - presumably with his tongue firmly in his cheek - 'emperor of illusion, prince of prestidigitation and maharajah of mystery' is stopping off in the region this month to tell the story of his partnership with his faithful companion, Baldwin The Magical Dog... Bristol-based Baldini comes complete with a host of five-star reviews and is a firm family favourite, so be sure to check him out before he disappears in the proverbial puff of smoke...

Cinderella Ice Cream Seller

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Wed 23 & Thurs 24 April; Macready Theatre, Rugby, Thurs 29 & Fri 30 May

Cinderella Ice Cream Seller's producers - Little Seeds Music company - are promising that their imaginative retelling of the classic fairytale will capture children's hearts and tickle their tastebuds. And well it might, courtesy of its sure-to-be-potent blend of thoughtful storytelling, 'stunning live music and theatrical magic'.



The show has been written and composed by Little Seeds Music's artistic director, Dave Gibb.

There's A Monster In Your Show

Lichfield Garrick, Mon 14 & Tues 15 April; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 10 & Sun 11 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 13 & Wed 14 May

Children's author Tom Fletcher's critically acclaimed *Who's In Your Book?* series here makes the leap from page to stage. The hit musical sees *Little Monster* being joined by friends Dragon, Alien and Unicorn for 50 minutes of comedy, chaos and high-energy fun.





LEARNING OPERA ON THE JOB

The internationally acclaimed Welsh National Opera (WNO) return to the Midlands next month to present Mozart's *The Marriage Of Figaro* and Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* - both of which will showcase the immense talents of the company's chorus. What's On recently caught up with members of the WNO Associate Artist programme (both old and new) to find out more...

Soprano Eiry Price was a student when she watched her first opera - Welsh National Opera (WNO) performing Puccini's *La bohème*. From that moment, Eiry, who was studying at the Royal College of Music in London, knew how she wanted her future to look.

"I knew I wanted to sing," recalls Eiry, who hails from Pencaenewydd in North Wales, "but I didn't know before watching that opera that I wanted to be an opera singer, really specifically. It clicked for me there: 'I

want to do this; I want to do what they're doing.' It came over me, the music, the text, the story. I remember listening to the orchestra, and with opera I always feel so overwhelmed with all these emotions, and it makes me feel something that I can't really describe. I just feel so whole after watching a piece of opera. It's also the drama, the tragedy, the love, the heartbreak - it just moves me."

Eiry's dream has come true, as she is currently a WNO Associate Artist, taking part

in a one-year programme in which young singers are offered support, training and mentorship early in their careers.

"The Associate Artist programme is amazing for young singers who have left studies and want to pursue a career in opera. There are so many opportunities for me on this programme and so much support available."

The scheme has introduced Eiry to a new world: "I'd never sung in a full opera before. I'd done opera scenes in college, but I've learnt so much already. I've had so many

lessons and coachings and so much support that I feel like it's really shaping me into a young artist."

One of the advantages of being part of WNO's Associate Artist scheme is the chance to sing roles in their productions. This spring, Eiry plays the young lover Barbarina and covers the servant Susanna in Mozart's *The Marriage Of Figaro*. She also performs *Second Niece* in Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*.

"I'm having coachings every day on the roles that I'm doing and just going through the music, adding layers to the roles, musically and artistically. It's all really helping, as I'm not doing it all by myself.

"I'm really excited for this production and looking forward to staging it with everyone. It's just a lovely atmosphere on the stage when you're all working together to try and create something amazing."

Soprano Harriet Eyley can vouch for the value of the programme, as she was an Associate Artist with WNO from 2018 to 2020. She too sang Barbarina and covered Susanna in *The Marriage Of Figaro*, as well as playing Oscar in Verdi's *Un ballo in maschera* and Norina in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*.

"The biggest thing about being an Associate Artist is the sense of community at WNO," she says. "I grew so much as an artist through the company, and it feels like home. I think we always remember those first big jobs out of university, and I'm forever grateful.

"You are taught your musicianship and your stagecraft at university. I honed that with WNO, and I had so much stage and rehearsal experience. That was brilliant, but it was also about the sense of teamwork on a collaborative artform and working together. And not just in the rehearsal room with other singers and musicians but also with other people in the company."

After completing her Associate Artist programme, Harriet, who was born in Derbyshire, returned to WNO as a visiting artist to play Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Krista in Janáček's *The Makropulos Affair*. This season, she's performing the page boy Cherubino in *The Marriage Of Figaro*.

"What's interesting with this one is that when we went into lockdown, I was actually doing this production of *The Marriage Of Figaro* for WNO. And now I feel like I've come full circle, because I'm coming back to *The Marriage Of Figaro* but in a different role. Cherubino is a role that I really wanted to sing. So I'm looking at the production from a different perspective. In so many ways I'm quite like Cherubino. Although I'm much older, I'm quite small in stature and quite flighty in character, so I'm looking forward to finding my teenage voice - 'am I in love, am I not in love, what is love?' I'm excited by the challenge."

For bass William Stevens, being a current

Associate Artist with WNO is giving him an incredible opportunity - to cover the lead role of Figaro and play him in the final tour performance of the Mozart opera.

"It's an amazing thing for any bass baritone, and a singer of my age, to be singing the title role in this opera with WNO," he says. "It's daunting but very exciting.

"It's an opera I know very well. I've sung all the roles I can sing in that opera at some point or another, and I've directed it for Bath Opera Company all around the South West. But to do it in a main production with this company is probably the biggest thing I will have done so far in my career. It's a lot of work but very exciting - and I will be filling out half of the theatre with my family!"

William, from Keynsham in Somerset, was a choral scholar at Bristol Cathedral and went on to study singing at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. He has held a love for opera since childhood.

"WNO have been an important part of my life for quite a long time. I've been watching their productions since I was quite young. The first time I saw WNO was *Madam Butterfly* in 2009 at the Bristol Hippodrome. I'd listened to a lot of opera by then and had done a lot of singing but not much opera. I had recently joined Bristol Opera Company, so I got my first opportunity to be on stage performing opera as part of the chorus in *The Pearl Fishers*. I thought I should go and see it done at the professional level, and the most obvious option was to see WNO at the Hippodrome."

Being offered a place on the Associate Artist programme by the opera company he had watched so often was a real bonus.

"The opportunity to have this big stepping stone in my career with WNO was particularly special for me. We get to have multiple coachings with the music staff on the repertoire we're doing with the company but also anything we're doing outside the company, and they are fantastic.

"There's also just the exposure of working with a company at WNO's level. I've been working as a professional singer for a while now, but this is my first real exposure to a national company; seeing how differently it's run and what's expected of you at this level." William recently toured in WNO's production of Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. He is keen to take on Mozart.

"I think *The Marriage Of Figaro* is some of the best music ever written for theatre; it's just remarkable. Also, it's a genuinely funny opera. There are a lot of ridiculous scenarios and farcical things, but there's also a lot you can relate to: silly relationship misunderstandings and relationships between you and your boss, or vice versa if you're the boss. It's timeless, funny, with wonderful music, and it's so relatable."

Fellow WNO Associate Artist soprano Erin Rossington says the programme was the next step as she builds her opera career.

"An Associate Artist is, I describe it, like an apprenticeship," she says. "You are part of the company and they are guiding you on the way, advising and helping. You're also doing some roles and working alongside people in the prime of their career.

"I was one of the nuns in *Suor Angelica*, and it's nice to be part of a production and see how other people learn things and how they work. It's learning on the job."

Erin, who is from Llanfair Talhaiarn in North Wales, covers the role of Countess Almaviva throughout the tour of *The Marriage Of Figaro*, and played her in Swansea.

"It's amazing for me to have WNO on my CV; there's so much more weight around it. To say I've studied and learned the role of Countess with WNO [as opposed to] just by myself - there's a massive difference because someone has believed in you and someone has trusted in your work."

For Erin, the Countess is a fascinating character.

"This is one of the core roles for a soprano within the repertoire, and I'm really excited to explore her more. She's quite an interesting character. She's developed a lot from when we see her in Rossini's *Barber Of Seville*. Then she was young, excited and passionate, but now she's being mistreated by her husband, who is being unfaithful.

"She's not happy to put up with it, and she's not sitting down and taking it. I think she's a very strong woman, but she's also aware that if she *did* take a stance, it wouldn't go her way. She's not stupid."

Erin is eager to bring the Countess to life: "I can't wait to be able to sing on the stage with the cast. It's a fantastic cast, and to be able to perform alongside them will be really exciting. I'm looking forward to embracing the nerves and throwing myself into the character.

"It's also really nice knowing that Harriet, a previous Associate Artist, is coming back to the company. I love WNO, and being from North Wales, I would love to return to my home company in the future for sure. It's nice to know Harriet had the same start as me - that's a good omen."

.....

Welsh National Opera perform Mozart's *The Marriage Of Figaro* at Birmingham Hippodrome on Thursday 8 May and Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* on Saturday 10 May

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Kiell Smith-Bynoe & Friends: Kool Story Bro

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 25 April

Taskmaster, Ghosts and The Great British Sewing Bee star Kiell Smith-Bynoe drops in to Birmingham Town Hall late this month with an entourage of fast-thinking comedians and a surprise celebrity host. Sold-out performances in Edinburgh, London and Brighton mark out Kool Story Bro as a show worth catching, with the talented ensemble using anecdotes provided by the audience to spin a host of totally unscripted and hugely ridiculous sketches. The production makes use of a rotating cast of improvisers, including Starstruck's Lola-Rose Maxwell and Nic Sampson, and Afterlife and Austentatious' Graham Dickson. Previous special-guest hosts have included Lily Allen, Mo Gilligan, Mathew Baynton and Guz Khan.

Rainer Hersch Orkestra

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 27 April

Theatre reviewers routinely wax lyrical about the Rainer Hersch Orkestra. And well they might; the talented ensemble of madcap virtuosos really are the final word in stand-up comedy/classical music crossovers (although, to be fair, they don't face much by way of competition in that particular genre!). Rainer and his band of merry musicians will not only be putting their unique spin on a wide selection of much-loved classics when they visit Theatre Severn late this month, they'll also be putting some icing on their concert cake by inviting the Midlands' very own Alistair McGowan to join in the fun. Should be good.



Magical Bones

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Sat 26 April

Magical Bones' inspiration for his Britain's Got Talent audition back in 2020 came via the story of Henry Box Brown, a 19th-century slave who, prior to becoming a magician, had escaped a life in captivity by hiding inside a box and posting himself to a free state... With a man like Henry as his hero, there's

little wonder the critically acclaimed magician, illusionist & Bboy - real name Richard Essien - is hitting the heights and turning some heads... A spellbinding evening of sleight-of-hand trickery awaits.



Craig Revel Horwood: Fab-U-Lous

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 18 April; Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 20 April; Dudley Town Hall, Fri 9 May

Craig Revel Horwood is best known as Strictly Come Dancing's longest-serving judge, but he's also an actor, choreographer, director and bestselling author. And he's recently added another string to his bow by releasing Revelations, his debut solo album, which he's publicising by way of this spring and early summer tour. An evening of big songs, tall tales and bucketloads of glamour is very much in prospect when he makes two of three West Midlands stop-offs this month.

Comedy Hypnotist & Mind Reading Show

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 3 April

Now here's a theatrical production that does what it says on the tin. Described as 'the next Derren Brown' - and backed up by many a

five-star review and some admiring words from comedian Jimmy Carr - Daniel Sinclair is here presenting 'a night of wonder and laughter'. Audience members are advised by Daniel's publicity to prepare themselves for a jaw-dropping, edge-of-the-seat experience.

Queer Planet Presented By Bi-Curious George

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 22 April

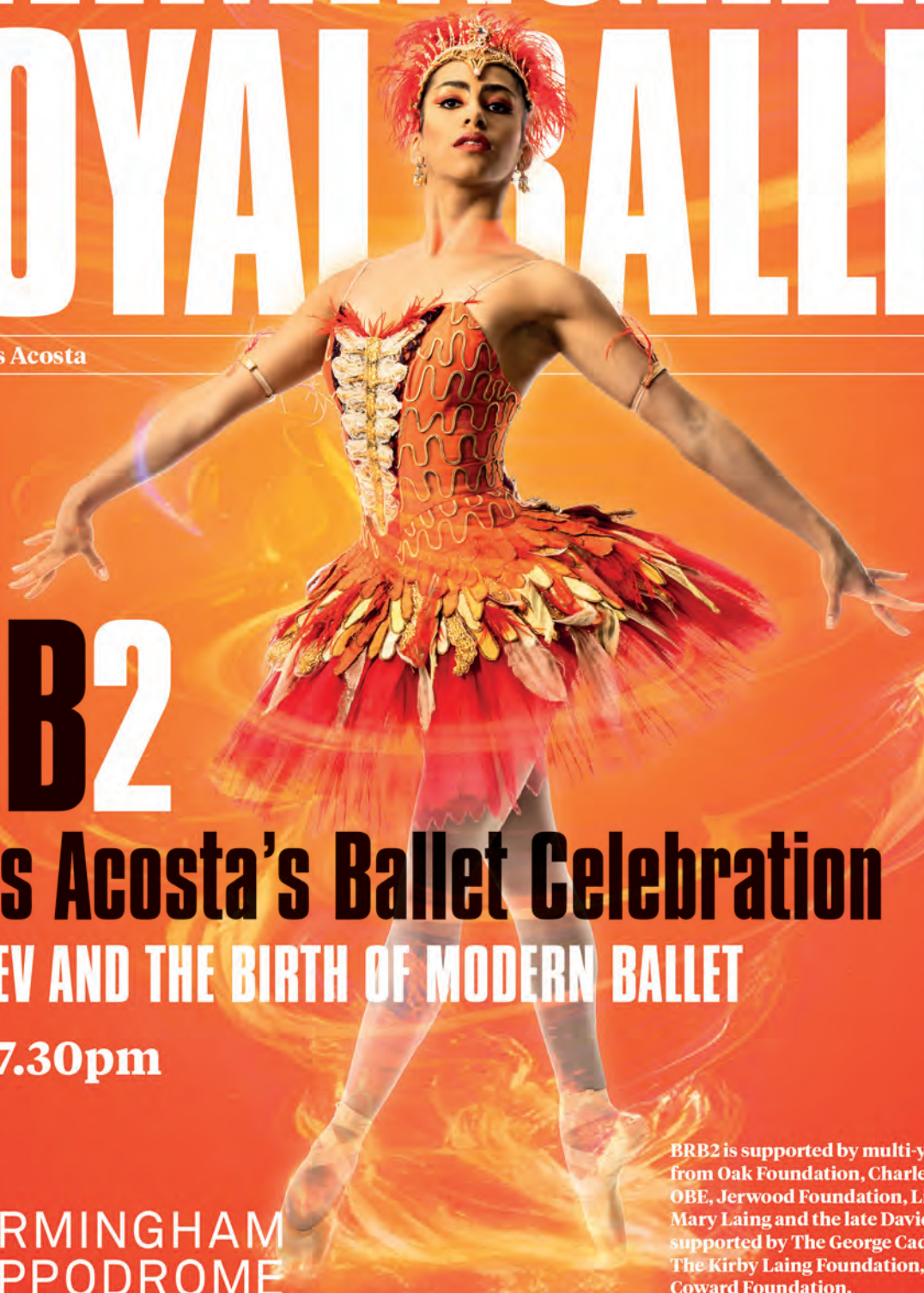
An award-winning drag king with a keen interest in the natural world? It can only be London's loveable nature boy, Bi-Curious George, who this month provides Midlands theatre-goers with the chance to run the rule over his critically acclaimed Edinburgh Fringe sell-out show. With his stated desire being 'to shatter the heteronormative binaries through which we view the natural world', George describes the production as a love letter to nature, presented in the form of a documentary, and combining stand-up comedy with parody songs and drag. Expect to be both entertained and educated - and to leave the venue knowing far more about dolphin orgies and gay giraffes than ever you did before you arrived.



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ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Dance previews from across the region

Aakash Odedra Company Songs Of The Bulbul

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 8 - Thurs 10 April

British South Asian dance star Aakash Odedra made a significant splash when he first appeared on the scene, quickly racking up collaborations with numerous high-profile choreographers, including Akram Khan, Sidi Larbi and Russell Maliphant.

Aakash's latest solo work is inspired by an ancient Sufi myth about a bulbul songbird. Captured and held in captivity, its melody serves as a metaphor for 'the fleeting moments of dance and an artist's life'.

The work is described by Aakash as a sensitive dialogue between Islamic poetry and Sufi kathak, a form of music that blends orchestral and Indian Classical tradition.



Karen & Gorke: Speakeasy

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 6 April

Karen Hauer and Gorke Marquez here make a welcome return with a show in which they're promising to unlock the door to an undercover world of iconic dance flavours. The Mamba, Charleston, Foxtrot and Salsa are all present and correct as the talented duo call to mind the New York Speakeasy, Havana dancefloors, the Chicago Blues scene, burlesque cabaret clubs and the glittering mirror balls of Studio 54.



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Drop CERT 15 (100 mins)

Starring **Brandon Sklenar, Meghann Fahy, Violet Beane, Ed Weeks, Travis Nelson, Jacob Robinson**
Directed by **Christopher Landon**

If you think blind dates are nerve-wracking, spare a thought for Violet, a widowed mother who's going on her first one in years. When it turns out that the man she's meeting in an upscale restaurant is more charming and handsome than she'd expected, she relaxes a little. Until, that is, anonymous drops to her phone begin; personal memes that escalate from annoying to homicidal, pinged by an unnamed, unseen troll.

And things soon go from bad to worse. Via her home security cameras, Violet sees a hooded figure. It's made clear to her that the intruder will kill her young son and babysitting sister unless she follows her unseen tormentor's instructions - the final one of which is to kill the man with whom she's currently on a blind date...

Released Fri 11 April

A Minecraft Movie

CERT PG (101 mins)

Starring **Jennifer Coolidge, Kate McKinnon, Jason Momoa, Emma Myers, Jack Black, Jemaine Clement** Directed by **Jared Hess**

This first-ever big-screen, live-action adaptation of the best selling video game of all time finds four misfits - Henry, Natalie, Dawn and Garrett 'The Garbage Man' Garrison - suddenly pulled through a mysterious portal into a bizarre, cubic wonderland that thrives on imagination. Their only chance of getting home is to master the strange new world in which they find themselves - while simultaneously protecting it from the evils of Piglins and Zombies. Teaming up with expert crafter Steve, the group find themselves needing to reconnect with the qualities that make them uniquely creative... the very skills, in fact, which each of them will desperately need if they are ever to thrive back in the real world.

Released Fri 4 April



Death Of A Unicorn

CERT tbc (104 mins)

Starring **Jenna Ortega, Paul Rudd, Téa Leoni, Will Poulter, Richard E Grant, Jessica Hynes**
Directed by **Alex Scharfman**



As if accidentally hitting and killing a pedestrian isn't bad enough, Elliot and his daughter, Ridley, find themselves faced with an even worse set of circumstances: they inadvertently run over a mythological unicorn.

The pair, en route to the weekend retreat of Elliot's billionaire boss, Dell Leopold (played by Richard E Grant), take the unicorn with them, and become aware of the creature's miraculous curative properties - something which Leopold is eager to exploit for the purpose of financial gain.

Problem is, the unicorn that's been hit and killed is a foal, and its bigger and far more monstrous-looking parents are soon on the war path and hell-bent on revenge...

Expect a winning blend of gore and humour.

Released Fri 4 April

The Return CERT 15 (116 mins)

Starring **Juliette Binoche, Ralph Fiennes, Charlie Plummer, Claudio Santamaria, Roberto Serpi, Chris Corrigan** Directed by **Uberto Pasolini**

Uberto Pasolini's bland adaptation of the last sections of Homer's famous epic poem, The Odyssey, sees its heavyweight stars, Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche, teaming up for a third time in their illustrious careers.

Haggard and unrecognisable after 20 years away fighting in the Trojan War, Odysseus (Fiennes) washes up on the shores of Ithaca. But much has changed in his kingdom. His beloved wife, Penelope (Binoche), is a prisoner in her own home, hounded by corrupt suitors who are eager to take the crown.

Scarred by his experience of the Trojan war and no longer the mighty warrior he once was, Odysseus must quickly rediscover his strength if he is to stand any chance of winning back everything that he's lost.

Released Fri 11 April



Warfare CERT tbc (95 mins)

Starring **Joseph Quinn, Noah Centineo, Will Poulter, Cosmo Jarvis, Kit Connor, Charles Melton**
Directed by **Alex Garland and Ray Mendoza**

Alex Garland's previous offering, *Civil War* - released last year and set in a fractured near-future America in violent conflict with itself - met with waves of critical acclaim. So there's plenty of excitement surrounding the release of this latest offering from the London-born filmmaker.

Co-written and co-directed with Ray Mendoza - an Iraq War veteran who acted as an advisor on *Civil War* - the film is a real-time recreation of an actual battle in which Mendoza was involved while stationed in Iraq. "It uses the traditional grammar of cinema," Garland told *Entertainment Weekly*. "Closeups, mids, wides, push-ins, shots wrapping around actors. It is a continuous action... so it's not shooting everything in one take, but it is real-time."

"It opened up the possibility, in a strange way, to stage something almost as if it's theatre."

Released Fri 18 April



The Penguin Lessons

CERT 12a (110 mins)

Starring **Steve Coogan, Björn Gustafsson, David Herrero, Jonathan Pryce, Aimar Miranda, Nicanor Fernandez**
Directed by **Peter Cattaneo**



The Penguin Lessons finds its inspiration in the true 1970s story of an emotionally constipated and thoroughly disillusioned Englishman (here played by Steve Coogan) who goes to work in a school in Buenos Aires in Argentina.

Expecting an easy ride, Tom Michell instead discovers a divided nation and a classroom of privileged but seemingly unteachable students.

But all is not lost... After rescuing an orphaned penguin from an oil-slicked beach, Tom's life is turned upside-down, and he soon finds himself undergoing both a personal and political awakening...

Released Fri 18 April

Sinners CERT tbc

Starring **Jack O'Connell, Hailee Steinfeld, Michael B Jordan, Wunmi Mosaku, Lola Kirke, Delroy Lindo** Directed by **Ryan Coogler**

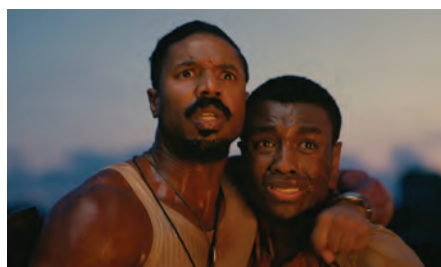
Creed star Michael B Jordan here follows in the footsteps of Robert De Niro by taking on dual roles (De Niro did so in last month's *The Alto Knights*).

Jordan plays twin brothers Smoke and Stack as they try to leave their troubled lives behind them. Returning to their hometown to start again, they discover a darkness far greater than ever they could have imagined. Ryan Coogler - who here takes the directorial reins for the first time since helming Marvel's *Black Panther* films - has revealed that, although *Sinners* will definitely feature vampires, the movie has plenty else to recommend it.

"The film is very genre fluid," he told *The Hollywood Reporter*. "It switches in and out of a lot of different genres..."

"Yes, vampires are an element, but it's not the only supernatural element in the movie. The film is about more than just that."

Released Fri 18 April



The Legend Of Ochi

CERT PG (96 mins)

Starring **Helena Zengel, Willem Dafoe, Emily Watson, Finn Wolfhard, Razvan Stoica, Carol Bors** Directed by **Isaiah Saxon**



In a secluded northern village on the island of Carpathia, a farm girl named Yuri is taught to fear the reclusive creatures known as the Ochi. However, when she discovers a lost and injured baby Ochi, she sets off on a journey to return it to its family...

Premiered earlier this year at the Sundance Film Festival, the movie has received a mixed reception from the critics. But if you're in the market for a film that calls to mind fantasy-genre releases like *The Dark Crystal* and *Neverending Story*, it should definitely be worth an hour and a half of your time.

Released Fri 25 April

PIGS MIGHT FLY

Award-winning children's author Malorie Blackman talks about how science fiction can become reality...



A new stage adaptation of Malorie Blackman's 1997 children's novel, *Pig Heart Boy*, visits the Coventry Belgrade Theatre this month as part of a national tour. It's the story of 13-year-old Cameron, who has a heart condition and is in need of a transplant. Desperate to take part in normal activities, like other children of his age, Cameron must decide how far he will go to get his life back - and whether it's better to have a pig's heart that works than a human heart that doesn't. Multi-award-winning author Malorie here talks about the joys of seeing her novel adapted for the stage...

What originally inspired you to write *Pig Heart Boy*, Malorie?

Pig Heart Boy originally came about because I read a newspaper article by a doctor predicting that we'd soon have to start using animal organs for heart and kidney transplants due to a severe shortage of human donors - and I thought, what a wonderful idea for a story!

Before I started writing, I did a lot of research on transplants. There weren't many books about xenotransplantation at the time, but I was fortunate that a TV documentary called *Your Life In Their Hands* was airing, which provided useful insights into surgery and transplants.

The fact that *Pig Heart Boy* is now being adapted into a stage play is just amazing. When you read a book, you imagine the characters and their inner lives, but there's something magical about seeing real actors bring those characters to life on stage. It's almost like peeking into somebody's window and seeing that life unfold before you - and that's really special.

How does it feel to revisit this story such a long time after you wrote it?

I wrote *Pig Heart Boy* in the mid-90s, and back then xenotransplantation was still an idea the doctors were speculating about: would it ever happen? This type of transplant was still perceived as science fiction when I wrote the book. But then, a couple of years ago, surgeons in the US performed the first pig heart transplant. Unfortunately, I think the patient died a couple of weeks after the operation, but the doctors learned important lessons from it.

I've always loved science and exploring the subtle line between what's possible and what's probable. Many things once deemed 'science fiction' - like mobile-phone technology, for example - have now become reality. This evolving potential is what fascinated me about xenotransplantation.

What challenges did you face writing a children's story that deals with complex medical and ethical issues?

I had to make sure all medical details were correct, so I watched documentaries and read extensively about transplants. To keep the story relatable, I narrated it from [the main character] Cameron's perspective; a teenager facing these dilemmas. I also visited a lot of schools and talked to many children about how they felt about this subject. For me, there was no right or wrong; what I wanted to explore was 'what would you do in Cameron's shoes?' Many had reservations about animal transplants, even if they weren't vegetarians, which sparked lively debates about the ethics of it.

What I wanted to do with the book was to present Cameron and his own experiences. These are the choices he made; good or bad, right or wrong, these are his choices. What would *you* have done? Where do you think he got it right, where do you think he got it wrong? I hope the play sparks debate about xenotransplantation and how people feel about it, and what choices they would make. I think this approach is much more engaging than dictating what's right or wrong, especially for young readers.

What do you hope audiences will take away from the stage adaptation?

First and foremost, I'd like audiences to enjoy the show. But if there's a takeaway, I'd like it to be the importance of empathy and understanding for others who may be going through similar life experiences. I'd love audiences to consider not just the science, but also the ethics behind xenotransplantation, and ponder 'Would I be comfortable receiving an organ from an animal if needed? How would I feel about it?' I really hope audiences will understand why Cameron and his family made the choices they made, and feel connected to the story.

Do you think *Pig Heart Boy* can be used as a tool to discuss complex topics like this in the classroom?

I think teachers will be able to use both the novel and the play to spark discussions about these topics in a way that feels less intimidating. It's easier to discuss gritty

topics when you're talking about somebody else, whether a real person or fictional characters. I think the idea of being able to watch a character, in this case Cameron, and what he's going through - why he decides to have the pig heart transplant and what it does to his life - makes it easier to discuss than just saying 'Let's talk about xenotransplantation' in the abstract. I think this makes the subject matter much more engaging and accessible.

When writing the book, how did you make sure your work would resonate with your audience?

I engaged with my target audience directly. I visited a number of schools and asked students questions like 'How would you feel about receiving an organ from an animal? Would you go along with it? If not, why?' This always led to interesting debates, with roughly half the room open to the idea and the other half opposed. As always, there was no right or wrong answer - I was just genuinely interested in their opinions. I wanted Cameron's thoughts on xenotransplantation to mirror how a real teenager might think. His family dynamic plays a role, too - he's aware of his own mortality, even as the adults around him try to shield him from it. Capturing that mix of maturity and vulnerability was essential for me.

When I was Children's Laureate, I spent a day at Great Ormond Street Hospital, where I saw how much the children understood their situations and prognoses. I believe it's crucial to give young people the chance to talk about or read about these issues, allowing them the space to express and process their feelings.

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***Pig Heart Boy* shows at The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry from Wednesday 2 to Saturday 5 April and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 8 to Saturday 12 April**

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John Davies (b. 1946), *Head of a Man*,
c. 1985-1988, resin, fibreglass, stone dust and acrylic paint.
© John Davies. Image courtesy of The Ingram Collection,
photo by John-Paul Bland.



This exhibition has been made possible as a result of the Government Indemnity Scheme. Rugby Art Gallery and Museum would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.

Visual Arts previews from around the region



Image: Stanhope Forbes, Lighting Up Times, 1902, courtesy of the Boweman Charitable Trust.

Elizabeth And Stanhope Forbes: A Marriage Of Art

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Sat 5 April - Sun 29 June

Elizabeth and Stanhope Forbes were very much the power couple of British Impressionism, with both artists already well established and enjoying success at the time of their marriage in 1889. This brand-new exhibition features what's being described as a 'sumptuous' selection of their artworks. The show includes many pieces that are on loan

from Penlee House Gallery & Museum, and which are visiting Worcester for the very first time. Also on display in the exhibition is Stanhope's Chadding On Mounts Bay, one of the most widely admired and beloved paintings in Worcester City's Fine Art collection.



Emii Alrai: River Of Black Stone

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, until Sun 15 June

Blackpool-born and Yorkshire-based artist Emii Alrai produces sculptures and installations that imitate archaeological artefacts and which combine ancient mythologies from the Middle East with oral histories from her own Iraqi heritage. Her aim with her art is to highlight the contrast between the polished aesthetics of museums and the states of ruin which befall archaeological objects and the landscapes from which they are

excavated. Emii's Compton Verney commission sees her responding to the venue's nationally important Naples Collection. Through a sequence of darkening rooms, the artist dramatises the moment of archaeological discovery, at the same time considering 'themes of volcanic eruption and geological rupture as metaphors for our times'.

Suzanne Holtom: And Hills Bore Scars

New Art Gallery, Walsall, until Sun 29 June

"During the pandemic, I lost my dad," explains Suzanne Holtom, "and as a result, my trips back home to the West Midlands became far more frequent. It was this continuing return to my original home, contemplating and experiencing this embodied landscape, that initiated a new direction in my work."

A deep mapping of place - encompassing geological time, personal experiences, social histories and memory - has become the primary motivation in Suzanne's art.

The paintings featured in And Hills Bore Scars - which draw from 'geosites' in the Black Country Global Geopark - contemplate bodily forms, land masses, histories, patterns of energy and industry, layered materiality and shifting terrains.

Visitors to the gallery on Saturday 10 May can join Suzanne for a printmaking session and a tour of her exhibition.



PRISM Photography Open

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, until Sun 18 May

Selected from an open call organised with PRISM Photography network, this thought-provoking exhibition presents portraits and landscapes - and both political and personal stories - which explore the themes of belonging and interconnectedness.



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Elizabeth and Stanhope Forbes
A Marriage of Art 5 April - 29 June
Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum



Autumn Breeze, Elizabeth Forbes, courtesy of Penlee House Gallery & Museum
Chadding on Mounts Bay, Stanhope Forbes, 1902, Worcester City Collection

For more information on opening times and admission prices please visit www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk



MAHTAB HUSSAIN
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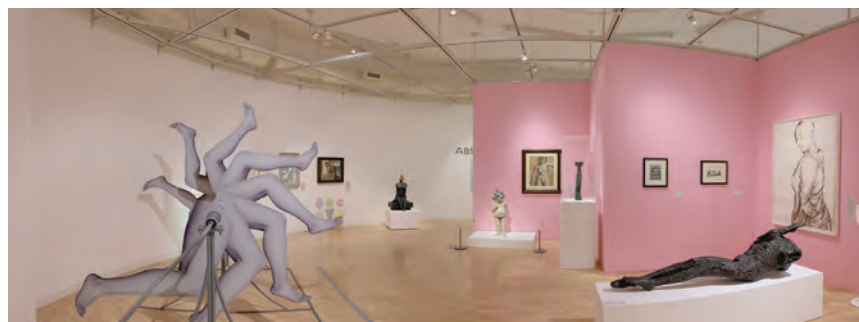
IKON Photoworks JOHN FEENEY



Ikon is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and Birmingham City Council. Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered charity no. 525892. Image: Mahtab Hussain, Al Mafid Al Saif, Birmingham (2024), courtesy Mahtab Hussain.



Visual Arts previews from around the region



Beyond The Canvas Rugby Art Gallery, until Sat 7 June

Taking the subtitle A Celebration Of British Sculpture From The Ingram Collection, Beyond The Canvas explores the diverse styles and techniques that defined British sculpture throughout the 20th century.

The Ingram Art Foundation boasts one of the most significant collections of modern British art in the UK. The collection is here sharing space with pieces from the widely admired Rugby Collection.

The display is being presented as part of the gallery's 25th anniversary celebration.



Hrair Sarkissian: Other Pains

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Sun 22 June

"Keeping the same way of thinking is depressive," Hrair Sarkissian told whitehotmagazine.com. "I am someone who makes a lot of jokes, and my work is completely depressive, melancholic, and [tells] only sad stories. There is nothing that gives a positive feeling. It's all kinds of desperation."

An Armenian born in Syria and currently based in London, Hrair is considered one of the leading conceptual photographers

of his generation. He also works with moving image, sculpture, sound and installation, conveying stories of conflict, displacement, loss and hope. Comprising three bodies of work, Hrair's now-showing Other Pains exhibition features captivating landscapes and urban scenes which reflect sites of pain, trauma or melancholy, either from the artist's own personal history or the previous experiences of others.

Rembrandt: Masterpieces In Black And White

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Sun 1 June

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is the only UK stop-off for this major new show, which marks the first time Rembrandt's etchings have been brought out of the Netherlands as a collection.

"We are delighted to be bringing his fascinating prints to Birmingham," says Epco Runia, head of collections at the Rembrandt House Museum, which has co-organised Masterpieces In Black And White with the American Federation of Arts. "With this exhibition, we hope to demonstrate that each of Rembrandt's prints is a work of art in its own right. If you take the time to look at them closely, a whole world opens up to you: a world in black & white, but with enormous visual richness."

Mahtab Hussain: What Did You Want To See

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, until Sun 1 June

A new exhibition of work by Birmingham artist Mahtab Hussain, What Did You Want To See features photographs which celebrate the city's Muslim community. The installation includes portraits of Muslim people and places of worship, but also examines how cameras can be used as tools for surveillance.

"I want visitors to leave the exhibition questioning how they see the world and the people around them," explains Mahtab. "I want them to think about visibility... what it truly means to witness someone, rather than observing them. "I hope the show can challenge assumptions and create moments of recognition, and also make people look at Birmingham in a new way. If we can do that, I think that'll be a really lovely thing."



Coventry Open

Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry, until Sun 8 June

As with the previous dozen editions, the 13th Coventry Open showcases the creative prowess of artists throughout the West Midlands region. The exhibition features an eclectic mix of artworks created in a wide range of mediums.



FAB-U-LOUS!

Craig Revel Horwood talks about his latest touring show, in which he sings songs from his new album, Revelations...

He's known and loved by millions for getting to the point. And midway through our conversation, Strictly Come Dancing judge Craig Revel Horwood does just that...

He's talking about his new tour - Revelations - which is set to visit more than 50 theatres between the beginning of April and the end of June.

"This show is unlike anything I've ever done. People aren't going to see 'The judge, Craig'. They're going to see the real Craig. It's about my life; it's who I am. It's the most personal

tour I've ever done."

Craig, who turned 60 in January, started out in musical theatre. His first-ever job was West Side Story. Music was in his life throughout his schooling in his native Australia. "It just seemed to be a very natural journey for me to go into musicals. I just loved performing in musicals until I was 30. People don't really know me as a singer because I've been in the background doing it, I suppose."

Other areas of his life took over. He became

one of the UK's best and most influential directors and choreographers, winning Olivier Award nominations for Spend Spend and My One And Only. He directed the opening ceremonies of the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester and was invited to join the judging panel for BBC's Strictly Come Dancing in 2004. As of 2025, he's Strictly's only original judge.

Strictly has made him a household name as a stringent rule-follower who has dished out more low scores of '1' than any other judge.

The show has also seen him become famous for catchphrases and unique locutions - from chah-chah-chah to fab-u-lous.

And yet there are many more strings to his diamante-encrusted bow, and singing is foremost among them. So when the opportunity arose last year to record an album of songs with the UK's leading musical theatre record label, Westway, he jumped at the chance.

"I thought: 'Come on, you're 60. Do it.' My mum's always told me to get an album together, and do something. So I thought: 'Yeah, I'll do it.' I grew up in the era before things were recorded - so there are no recordings of my earlier performances in theatre. No one had mobile phones and all of that malarkey back then. Now, everything is recorded, no matter what you do. I walk out the hotel room, and it's recorded by someone."

So Craig went into the studio and recorded Revelations - Songs Boys Don't Sing. The release is a stunning collection of tunes that showcases a marvellous, emotive, pitch-perfect voice. His interpretations of such songs as Memory show a discombobulating degree of warmth and empathy. Don't Rain On My Parade reveals him as the ultimate razzle-dazzle showman, while As Long As He Needs Me, from Oliver!, is a song that takes on new meaning with Craig's thoughtful tenderness.

Just like the Great British public, who gave the singer his first chart hit, Craig was thrilled. "Singing is such a liberating experience. Each song on the album means something to me. You know, the first-ever musical that my mum went to see with the kids was Jesus Christ Superstar, so I've recorded I Don't Know How To Love Him.

"Waltzing Matilda is in there because I was born in Australia, and when we grew up, it was like a national anthem.

"I want to talk about the songs that I love and the reasons they are still with me and in my life. I know I've written three autobiographies, but my autobiographies were always about how I got Strictly. This show, for me, is strictly about music and my passion and love for it.

"That's what drives my life, and it's just so nice to be able to get up there and sing and entertain people, because that's what I was born to do."

Many of the songs will be familiar to Craig's fans - and will have a special place in their heart, just as they do in Craig's.

"I wanted to do Memory, from Cats, because I

was in that show, but I'd never get to sing that song because I'd obviously never get the part of Grizabella. It's the same with As Long As He Needs Me, from Oliver! It just goes without saying, you know, that I'll never play Nancy.

"So the record, and the tour, gives me an opportunity to sing songs that I know and love. The show will be about my love for the music and how it's affected my life. It'll be about relationships, too, because we all go through the same emotions in relationships.

"I'll be talking about that, and heartbreak, and where it can lead. You know, Adele has proven how much emotion heartbreak can evoke, not just for singers, but for the audience, too."

Craig will be joined on stage by super-talented musician Ben Goddard, who fans will recall from their double-act on Celebrity Gogglebox. He can't wait to hang out with one of his best mates, and is expecting plenty of laughter along the way.

"The tour will be the opportunity to have a good time along with Ben, who I love. I've worked with him quite a lot, directing with him, and we did a one-man show together, which was hilarious.

"For me, this is about the real Craig Revel Horwood, not the judge Craig Revel Horwood. It's about my life before I became a judge, and then my life after being a judge, because that, of course, is the only thing that I'm famous for."

Here's the thing. Music is our universal language. All of us have songs that we love - and for a myriad of reasons. In Craig's case, listening to his selection of favourite songs, and understanding the meanings of them, helps us get to know him. So, for instance, My Way is a song he associates with his father's death and is deeply personal.

"That was my father's favourite song, and I had to sing it when he died, just before Christmas, 10 years ago. And I've been singing that sort of ever since in pantomime, but it always reminds me, you know, of my father, because that was one of his favourite tunes.

"So there's a lot of emotion behind each one of the songs that I sing, which I think is good, you know. And there's a lot of fun in there as well, because, of course, I have nothing really to do with Disney, The Lion King."

There will be other tributes during the show, including to The Vivienne and Paul O'Grady, both of whom were artists that Craig knew

and admired. And, of course, there'll be plenty of Strictly.

"It's been Fab-U-Lous to have been there since the start. None of us could ever have believed it would become the phenomenon that it did. It's been a huge part of my life and the reason that people know me. So yes, of course I'll be talking about Strictly. I don't think people would forgive me if I didn't."

At a time in life when many are slowing down, or reaching a happy and stable plateau, Craig continues to chase his dreams. "Recording taught me so many things. It taught me how to be quiet; it taught me how to add more emotion into the sound of my voice as well. It's not that I wanted to sound like Barbra Streisand or Shirley Bassey, you know, but I had to discover who I was. Who is Craig Revel Horwood, and what is his sound and what is his voice?"

"I think a lot of artists come across that. Human League has a certain sound. Rod Stewart had the raspy sound. But I thought, what is Craig Revel Horwood's sound? Singing is about having an amazing vocal quality, rather than a pitch-perfect voice. I mean, Dame Judi Dench once came on stage and sang Send In The Clowns. No, she's not a singer. She's never been able to sing. But because of her commitment to the character, to the emotion, it came across brilliantly. That was one of the best renditions of Send In The Clowns I've ever heard."

And now it's time to hit the road. Craig is more than happy to temporarily ditch the comfort of his judge's chair on Strictly, or the comfort of a West End theatre, to head into the regions.

"The reason I love touring is that it takes me to the people, and I get to see the country. It's about that as much as meeting people and learning because, you know, in certain areas, you'll get different audiences.

"I'm going to 53 theatres around the country in three months, so it's pretty full-on. There are some places I've been before that I can't wait to return to, and those places I've never been. It's going to be great, and I'm really looking forward to it."

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Craig Revel Horwood: Revelations visits Lichfield Garrick Theatre on Friday 18 April; William Aston Hall, Wrexham, Sat 19 April; Birmingham Town Hall on Sunday 20 April & Dudley Town Hall on Fri 9 May



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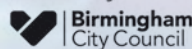
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Events previews from around the region



Spring Steam Gala Severn Valley Railway, Fri 18 - Mon 21 April

Severn Valley Railway's four-day festival of steam makes a welcome return this month. The 2025 edition of the show will feature appearances by LMS Jubilee No 45596 Bahamas and GWR No 6880 Betton Grange.

The gala will see three main trains running between Kidderminster and Hampton Loade, accompanied by a mixture of local and goods trains and the DMU operating between Kidderminster and Highley.



St George's Day Celebrations Tamworth Castle, Sat 19 April

Tamworth's popular St George's Day celebrations are back for 2025 and feature medieval-themed fun for the whole family. The line-up of entertainment includes jousting, archery, falconry displays, a living-history camp, fairground rides and children's activities.

Epico the dragon and the Grand Medieval Joust are both back by popular demand, too. Other attractions include workshops, displays, hamsterzorb, food vendors, and a medieval encampment featuring equipment and living-history demonstrations.

CountryTastic

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 17 April

Getting your hands dirty promises to be plenty of fun at CountryTastic, where exploring the journey of growth is this year's theme.

From digging deep into the soil, to planting seeds and watching them flourish, Dig - Plant - Grow celebrates the wonders of farming, gardening and the natural world.

The 2025 event is packed with interactive activities and hands-on workshops, from recycled arts & crafts, cooking and planting seeds, right through to sporting fun.

The show will also feature inspiring demonstrations and special performances, including appearances by JB Gill and Peter Rabbit.



Earth Day

Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, Tues 22 April

Thinktank's Earth Day celebrations include hosting Autin Dance Theatre Company's performance of Out Of The Deep Blue.

An outdoor spectacle featuring Eko, a 13-foot-tall SeaGiant Puppet, the show uses dance, movement and puppeteering to tell a moving story about Earth's climate emergency.

To further celebrate the special day, the museum team will be running numerous extra activities. These include under-the-sea object handling, an ichthyosaur make-and-take session, climate tours of the museum, and origami plant pots and Lego creature workshops.





West Midlands Police MUSEUM
 Saturday 12th April - Sunday 27th April

UNLOCK FORENSIC FUN THIS EASTER

Join us as we explore the history of forensics and how police use DNA!

West Midlands Police MUSEUM WWW.MUSEUM.WEST-MIDLANDS.POLICE.UK



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Events previews from around the region



Cirquise Albrighton Garden Centre, Sat 12 - Sun 27 April

Featuring 'laughter-filled clowns, death-defying acrobats, breathtaking jugglers and awesome contortionists', Cirquise is promising 'a dazzling combination of high-energy, jaw-dropping talent, an electric atmosphere and an unforgettable

experience'. Before showtime, audience members can take advantage of photo opportunities - and satisfy any hunger pangs by partaking in a selection of tasty treats, including candy floss, popcorn and doughnuts!



Pilot Training Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford, Sat 12 - Sun 27 April

RAF Museum Midlands is hosting an array of aviation-themed activities for the whole family to enjoy across the Easter holiday. The interactive Pilot Training show, presented by Up An' At 'Em History (Monday 14 - Friday 18 April), offers participants aged six and older the chance to step into the shoes of a World War Two pilot and learn all about the levels of preparation, determination and courage that were required during the Battle of Britain. Meanwhile, the Aviation Cadets Show

(Tuesday 22 - Friday 25 April) - a hands-on, family-friendly activity - will test participants' take-off, physical and code-breaking skills. Other activities available across the holidays include paper plane engineering (Saturday 12 - Sunday 27 April), an Easter basket make & take (Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 and Saturday 19 & Sunday 20 April), and a museum-wide Easter egg trail (Saturday 12 - Sunday 27 April).

Easter Eggstravaganza

Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire, Fri 18 - Mon 21 April

Hartlebury Castle's ever-popular Easter egg hunts are back! Search the grounds high and low for eggs, and be rewarded with a chocolate prize. The Easter Bunny will also be on hand to help you put your best foot forward and pose for a special photo or two...! Easter-themed activities and stories, a spring family trail, and the chance to learn fun facts about Easter while exploring the grounds, further add to the event's appeal.



International Living History Festival

Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Sat 26 & Sun 27 April

Avoncroft Museum comes to life across the final weekend of the month as 40-plus living-history reenactment groups set up their camps in and around the venue's historic buildings. Visitors can check out lots of hands-on activities, explore the historically themed market and enjoy browsing numerous trade stands.






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Events previews from around the region



Easter Holiday Fun Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 12 - Sun 27 April

Black Country Living Museum is hosting an array of family crafts and activities this Easter, including flower pressing, spring cleaning, gardening, and spring flower paper crafts. A spring pram event, traditional street games, a spring discovery trail and a choir practice singalong also feature.



Find The Flock: Shaun The Sheep Trail

Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire, Sat 5 April - Sun 18 May

Trentham Gardens is this month launching an art installation featuring 12 supersized Shaun the Sheep sculptures. Presented in collaboration with public-art experts Wild In Art and Academy Award-winning animation company Aardman - the creators of Shaun the Sheep - the family-friendly Find The Flock trail is included with standard garden admission. Trentham members can enjoy the installation for free.

Easter Motor Show & Autojumble

Weston Park, Shropshire, Sun 20 & Mon 21 April

A content-packed day of motoring heritage awaits visitors to Weston Park's family-friendly Easter Motor Show & Autojumble. The popular two-day event features more than 1,000 display cars and motorcycles - including a wide selection of club vehicles - and up to 100 autojumble and retail stands.



Easter Family Adventures

Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham, Sat 12 - Sun 27 April

Step back in time to Medieval England at Sudeley Castle with a family game of 'Tudor Guess Who'. As visitors explore the castle gardens and secret pathways, they will be invited to search for Henry VIII's six wives - and to discover giant Tudor eggs hidden around the castle grounds! Easter weekend itself will see Elizabeth I paying a visit to the castle. Egg decorating and Tudor dancing and games also feature.



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Your week-
by-week
listings guide
April 2025

the list



Dear Evan Hansen at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre - Tues 1 - Sat 5 April

Music | Comedy | Theatre | Dance | Events | Visual Arts | and more!

What's On

Tues 1 - Sun 6 April



The Undercover Hippy - Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

Fri 4 April

Mon 7 - Sun 13 April



Bing's Birthday - Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Sat 12 April

Mon 14 - Sun 20 April



Do I Love You? - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Tues 15 & Wed 16 April

Mon 21 - Wed 30 April



Reg D Hunter - Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

Sun 27 April

VISUAL ARTS IN THE MIDLANDS

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Exhibition of powerful photographs showcasing animal behaviour, spectacular species and the fragility of our planet, until Sun 20 Apr

CURTIS HOLDER: DRAWING CARLOS ACOSTA Curtis Holder, winner of Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year in 2020, was commissioned to draw Carlos Acosta, director of Birmingham Royal Ballet. This display brings together portraits Curtis made during the competition and his working sketches.

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham

SU RICHARDSON: IN STITCHES The largest retrospective of Richardson's work to date, and the first solo exhibition in her home town. Works include recent soft sculptures that explore themes of motherhood, the maternal body, breastfeeding, loss and illness, until Sun 1 June

New Art Gallery, Walsall

EQUAL + ABLE = NOT A LABEL Exhibition exploring ableism through the New Art Gallery Walsall Collections, until Sun 18 May

EARTHBOUND A major group exhibition, set within the context of global anxiety about the climate crisis and planetary health research, until Sun 8 June

OUTSIDE IN: SHELTER A National Open Exhibition in collaboration with the charity, including a 21-week residency by West Midlands artist Chantal Pitts, until Sun 29 June

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

SUN & FIRE: LIFE AND DEATH AT THE DAWN OF HISTORY Step into the ancient Shropshire landscape in an interactive exhibition exploring the lives of the people who lived there before written records, until Wed 30 Apr

SHROPSHIRE QUILTERS: THREADS OF FRIENDSHIP Exhibition celebrating 40 years of Shropshire Quilters, looking at some of the group's work and some of their favourite objects from Shropshire Museums' textile collection, until Sun 22 June

The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

THE TOYS STRIKE BACK EXHIBITION Unique exhibition bringing childhood memories back to life through one of the UK's largest collections of vintage Star Wars toys and collectibles, until Sun 1 June

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

POP, PRINT, PROTEST Exploring how Pop artists used mixed media collage and combined text and image in order to convey powerful, persuasive challenges to capitalism, racism and conflict, until Sun 11 May

SUBJECTS OF STATE, LABOURS OF LOVE Immersive video installation and exhibition, capturing the shared joys, celebrations, struggles, oppressions and complexities experienced by Caribbean heritage communities, until Sun 8 June

Elsewhere:

ALEXANDRA KINGSWELL: SEEKING THE LIGHT Featuring 17 textile works celebrating the joy, hope and wonder of colour and strong geometric shapes, until Mon 14 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

CHRIS DAY: STORYTELLER IN GLASS Exploring the interplay of a vibrant range of colours and the texture of mixed materials, Chris often incorporates into his work recycled plumbing materials, like copper metal cages, manipulating glass to create tension and emotional depth, until Sun 1 June, Stourbridge Glass Museum

GREENER GLASS Explore the beauty and innovation of environmentally sustainable glass art in this unique exhibition, emphasising eco-friendly practices and the artistic exploration of environmental themes, until Sun 27 July, Stourbridge Glass Museum

IRONBRIDGE FINE ARTS SPRING 2025 EXHIBITION Featuring works of mixed media by Wayne Longhurst, Linda Nevill, Rob Pountney, Rob Leckey, Louise Davies & Claire Walton, until Sat 24 May, Ironbridge Fine Arts, Ironbridge, Shropshire

EMMA BARNARD: MEMENTO VIVERE Exhibition of image-based poetry, inviting you into a space where words and images create a sanctuary for the soul, until Sat 3 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

HEAD TO ART EXHIBITION Showcase of work by Midlands artists, created using a wide range of media, Wed 2 - Wed 30 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

THE BRITISH PUPPET AND MODEL THEATRE GUILD Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the guild, featuring important puppets that tell its story, Thurs 5 Apr - Sun 31 Aug, Bantock House Museum, Wolverhampton

BEAR STEPS ART GALLERY EXHIBITIONS Featuring works by Lesley Palmer and Julie Mortimer, Sun 27 Apr - Sat 10 May, Bear Steps Art Gallery, Shrewsbury



The Undercover Hippy - Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

Gigs

PAUL RYAN + PAUL SNOOK + ZEN FINN + SUPERNOVA Tues 1 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 1 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

NEMZZZ Tues 1 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DAVID GRAY Tues 1 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ORACLE SISTERS Tues 1 Apr, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

MOUTH CULTURE + MIRROR TALK + KEZ Tues 1 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

DITZ Wed 2 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WHY? Wed 2 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LOUIS DUNFORD Wed 2 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

CANNED PINEAPPLE Wed 2 Apr, The Victoria, Birmingham

OLLY ALEXANDER Wed 2 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF JAMES TAYLOR Wed 2 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

LORDI Wed 2 Apr, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

ALY BAIN & PHIL CUNNINGHAM Wed 2 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ROB GREEN Thurs 3 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SOUND OF THE LIONESS CELEBRATES AMY WINEHOUSE Thurs 3 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

LAMBRIINI GIRLS Thurs 3 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

CHOKESLAM + CAPITAL PUNISHMENT UK + FINAL WORDS + CALLOUT + SCREWDRIVER Thurs 3 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

LABOTOMY Thurs 3 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

AIKO Thurs 3 Apr, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

SARAH JANE SCOUTEN Thurs 3 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ELO AGAIN Thurs 3 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

SOUTH OF SALEM + HIGH PARASITE + IN SEARCH OF SUN Thurs 3 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

TOPLOADER Thurs 3 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE REMI HARRIS HOT CLUB TRIO Thurs 3 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

LEGEND - THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY Thurs 3 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE ROD STEWART SONGBOOK Thurs 3 - Fri 4 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

MIGHTY MIGHTY + THE PROCTORS Fri 4 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CARL SINCLAIR Fri 4 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE LILACS + THE ROSADOCS + CRUZ Fri 4 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

JAMIE GREY Fri 4 Apr, O2 Academy, B'ham

DUNEBUG + STRIDE + CIARAN BARBER Fri 4 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SAVE FACE Fri 4 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

BOOM BOOM WOMB Fri 4 Apr, The Victoria, B'ham

MIKE AND THE MECHANICS Fri 4 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

LEGACY OF THE KHANS Fri 4 Apr, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

DAVE BUSTOS QUINTET + JULIEN DURAND'S DREAMSCAPES Fri 4 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

NXTGEN#5 Fri 4 Apr, The Rainbow, Birmingham

BARBRA STREISAND TRIBUTE SHOW Fri 4 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

BLACK CELEBRATION - DEPECHE MODE TRIBUTE Fri 4 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS UK Fri 4 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

ABDOUJAPAROV Fri 4 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

THE 900 Fri 4 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE ELO ENCOUNTER Fri 4 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

LE BEAT Fri 4 Apr, The Quarter at Potbank, Stoke-on-Trent

SEA FEVER Fri 4 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

JAH WOBLE AND THE INVADERS OF THE HEART Fri 4 Apr, Lichfield Guildhall

CHRISTINE BOVILL Fri 4 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

UNDERCOVER HEROES Fri 4 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

FLEETING RUMOURS + TOTO UK Fri 4 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE BLOCKHEADS Fri 4 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE UNDERCOVER HIPPIE Fri 4 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

DAN SEALEY Fri 4 Apr, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, North Shropshire

BAYBOARDS Sat 5 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

LEVI WASHINGTON Sat 5 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

SANTŪ Sat 5 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

OVERPASS + BALANCING ACT + EIGHTY EIGHT MILES Sat 5 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BROOKE COMBE Sat 5 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

PETE WYLIE: THE MIGHTY WAH Sat 5 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SKUNK ANANSIE Sat 5 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

REVIVA THA RAGE Sat 5 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

GOAT MAJOR + BLACK GROOVE + DAMN CRATERS + RED EYED CULT Sat 5 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

GABRIELLE Sat 5 Apr, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

JASMINE SANDLAS Sat 5 Apr, Forum, Birmingham

SHAMBOLICS Sat 5 Apr, The Rainbow, B'ham

XODUS: TRIBUTE TO BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS Sat 5 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

CLEARWATER CREEDENCE REVIVAL Sat 5 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

RATS IN THE KITCHEN - UB40 TRIBUTE Sat 5 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic,

Dudley

BORN IN THE 80S Sat 5 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE MAGIC OF MICHAEL JACKSON Sat 5 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

SAMANTICS AND NICK PARKER Sat 5 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

MASSIVE WAGONS + VIRGIN MARYS + HOLLOWSTAR + THE KARMA EFFECT Sat 5 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

NORTHERN LIVE Sat 5 Apr, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

WAYWARD SONS Sat 5 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE BIG FOUR TRIBUTE - METALLICA + MEGADETH + SLAYER + ANTHRAX Sat 5 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT? A TRIBUTE TO TINA TURNER Sat 5 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

ARIANA GRANDE TRIBUTE Sat 5 Apr, The Quarter at Potbank, Stoke-on-Trent

LARGE PLANTS + THE BLACK APPLES Sat 5 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

GEORGE! THE CONCERT - GEORGE HARRISON TRIBUTE Sat 5 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

MEGSON Sat 5 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DIVAS Sat 5 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

RUTI Sun 6 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT + SAM PALLADIO Sun 6 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SWEETPOOL + BARBICAN ESTATE + THE BRACKISH + KENDO NAGASAKI + RAY VORG Sun 6 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

THE MOODY BLUES' JOHN LODGE Sun 6 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

A TRIBUTE TO JAMES BROWN Sun 6 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

HUE AND CRY Sun 6 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

Classical Music

WILLIAM BRACKEN PIANO RECITAL

Programme includes works by Beethoven, R Schumann, C Schumann & Liszt, Tues 1 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

SHREWSBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: SPRING CONCERT

Featuring John Moore (conductor), Alex Postlethwaite (leader) & Nikita Lukinov (piano). Programme includes works by Weber, Beethoven & Brahms, Wed 2 Apr, Shrewsbury School

FIBONACCI QUARTET Featuring Kryštof Kohout & Luna de Mol (violins), Elliot Kempton (viola) & Findlay Spence (cello). Programme includes works by Schulhoff, Smetana & Beethoven, Wed 2 Apr, Keele University Chapel

CBSO: SIBELIUS & DVOŘÁK Featuring Dinis Sousa (conductor), Alina Ibragimova (violin) & CBSO Youth Chorus. Programme also features Arvo Pärt's Our Garden, Thurs 3 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

STABILIA PIANO DUET Featuring Viola Lenzi & Isabella Gori. Programme includes works by Dvorak, Gershwin & Ravel, Thurs 3 Apr, The Gateway Arts Centre, Shrewsbury

THE CARDUCCI QUARTET Featuring Matthew Denton & Michelle Fleming (violins), Eoin Schmidt-Martin (viola), Emma Denton (cello) & Julian Bliss (clarinet). Programme includes works by Schubert & Mozart, Fri 4 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: BRAVE NEW WORLD Featuring Erina Yashima (conductor) & Anna Tsybuleva (soloist). Programme includes works by Humperdinck, Grieg & Dvořák, Fri 4 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND Featuring Students from Chetham's School of Music, Fri 4 Apr, St Chad's Shrewsbury

CBSO: NORTHERN LIGHTS Featuring Robert Ames (conductor) & Ex Cathedral. Programme includes works by Jóhannsson, Guðnadóttir, Arnalds & more..., Sat 5 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WOMBOURNE AND DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY: BRAHMS REQUIEM Featuring Edward Caine (conductor), Clará

Preston Myakicheff (soprano), Oliver Barker (baritone) & Orchestra da Chiesa, Sat 5 Apr, St John's Church in the Square, Wolverhampton

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR: BACH MASS IN B MINOR Featuring Roderick Williams OBE (baritone), Sofia Ticciati (soprano), Simon Ponsford (countertenor), Ruairi Bowen (tenor), Paul Spicer (conductor) & The Musical and Amicable Society, Sat 5 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

THE NEEDWOOD SINGERS PREPARE FOR EASTER Featuring Margaret Langford (conductor). Programme includes works by Handel & J S Bach, Sat 5 Apr, St Michael on Greenhill Church, Lichfield

HALESOWEN ORCHESTRA FAMILY CONCERT: WITCHES & WIZARDS Featuring Lee Armstrong (conductor) & Claire Thompson (leader). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Holst, Humperdinck & more..., Sat 5 Apr, Cradley Heath Salvation Army Church

NORTH STAFFS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: SCOTT, BURNS AND DE LA SALE Featuring Juan Ortuño (conductor) & Georgina Bloomfield (soloist). Programme includes works by MacCunn, Bruch & Dvořák, Sat 5 Apr, St John Fisher Catholic College, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ECHO RISING STARS: CARLOS FERREIRA (CLARINET) Featuring Pedro Emmanuel Pereira (piano). Programme includes works by Widor, Debussy, Horowitz & more..., Sun 6 Apr, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

PAUL CARR ORGAN MUSIC: BACH IN LENT Sun 6 Apr, Holy Trinity Church, Wordsley

SHREWSBURY CHORAL SOCIETY SHOWCASE Featuring Yuxuan Zhao (piano). Programme includes works by Chopin, Sun 6 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

Arena & Arts Centre

JONNY COLE Thurs 3 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, JASON PATTERSON & KATE LUCAS Thurs 3 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

SHABAZ ALI Thurs 3 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

KEITH FARNAN, ANDREW O'NEILL, KENT CAMERON, MARTY RILEY & DAVE TWENTYMAN Thurs 3 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

JUSTIN MOORHOUSE Thurs 3 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DAVE LONGLEY, EDI JOHNSTON, JIM BROWN & DAN SMITH Thurs 3 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

A CELEBRATION OF FATHER TED WITH JOE ROONEY Thurs 3 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

MICHAEL SHAFAR, ROBIN MORGAN, JASON PATTERSON, KATE LUCAS & JAMES TRICKEY Fri 4 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

JOE KENT-WALTERS IS FRANKIE MONROE Fri 4 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LUCY PORTER Fri 4 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

GLENN WOOL, JON PEARSON, ANNABELE DEVEY & BENNY SHAKES Fri 4 Apr, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

JONNY COLE Fri 4 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

THE COMEDY STORE PLAYERS Fri 4 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

JOHN ROBERTSON, JESSIE NIXON, JOSEPH EMSLIE & KAREN BAYLEY Sat 5 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

MICHAEL SHAFAR, ROBIN MORGAN, JASON PATTERSON & KATE LUCAS Sat 5 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BIG DEAL COMEDY Sat 5 Apr, Old Joint Stock, Birmingham

ALFIE MOORE Sat 5 Apr, The Anstice, Telford Theatre

JOSH PUGH: WORK IN PROGRESS Sun 6 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LOU SANDERS Sun 6 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Theatre

EDWARD II Double Olivier Award winner and RSC Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans takes the lead in Christopher Marlowe's famous play, until Sat 5 Apr, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH Romance, drama and fantasy

Comedy

IAIN STIRLING Tues 1 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

SISTERS IN THE CITY LIVE Wed 2 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

NINJA BENJAMIN, ANDREW BIRD, PETER BRUSH & FREDDY QUINNE Wed 2 Apr, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

JASON MANFORD Wed 2 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

JONNY COLE Wed 2 Apr, Walsall



Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

combine in a story that explores what happens when love, fate and the laws of the universe collide, until Sat 19 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES THE MUSICAL Paul Whitehouse returns as Grandad in a touring production of the West End hit, featuring 'cherished material from Britain's best-loved TV series', Mon 31 Mar - Sat 12 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE ADDAMS FAMILY Shrewsbury High School present an amateur version of the kooky musical, Tues 1 - Thurs 3 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GHOST THE MUSICAL Rebekah Lowings stars as Molly Jensen and Jacqui Dubois as Oda Mae Brown in the stage adaptation of one of cinema's biggest all-time hits, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Apr, The Alexandra, B'ham

DEAR EVAN HANSEN Multi-award-winning musical concerning a high-school senior suffering social anxiety, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



EVITA Lichfield Musical Youth Theatre present an amateur version of the Tim Rice/Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

LADY JANE GREY Immersive production of the award-winning play, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Apr, Oldbury Rep

THE SILENCE OF SNOW: THE LIFE OF PATRICK HAMILTON Solo show about one of the great English writers of the inter-war years, Wed 2 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE BAND - THE NEW TAKE THAT MUSICAL! Stone Revellers Musical

Theatre present an amateur version of the Tim Firth/Gary Barlow musical, Wed 2 - Sat 5 Apr, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

AWOL Rob Gee's play follows two old men who escape from a care home to embark on an adventure at a metal festival, Thurs 3 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE TUNNELLERS Tower Players present a play by local playwright Tom Allsopp which brings to life 'the most unusual aspect of World War One', Thurs 3 - Sat 5 Apr, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES Central Youth Theatre (CYT) present an amateur version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic story, Fri 4 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

ELLEN KENT: MADAMA BUTTERFLY Puccini's heartbreaking tale, performed by the Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv, with international soloists, a highly praised chorus and full orchestra, Fri 4 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

DISNEY'S FROZEN JR Amateur version of the much-loved classic, performed by Gatehouse Junior Rep, Fri 4 - Sat 5 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Kids Theatre

SHARK IN THE PARK A fin-tastic family musical in which all three of Nick Sharratt's Shark In The Park children's books are performed live on stage, Sat 29 Mar - Sun 6 Apr, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE DINOSAUR THAT POOPED: A ROCK SHOW! New musical for younger audiences, adapted from the bestselling books by Tom Fletcher & Dougie Poynter, Sat 5 Apr, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

STORIES IN THE DUST Live music and puppetry combine in a funny, heartfelt and hopeful eco-fable that promises to take young audiences on

a journey to another world, Sun 6 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Dance

ANTON DU BEKE - AT THE MUSICALS Featuring a live band, guest singer and dancers, Wed 2 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KAREN HAUER & GORKA MARQUEZ - SPEAKEASY Join the Strictly duo on a journey that incorporates the New York speakeasy, Havana dance floors, the Chicago blues scene, burlesque cabaret clubs and the glittering mirror balls of Studio 54, Sun 6 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ANTON DU BEKE - AT THE MUSICALS Featuring a live band, guest singer and dancers, Sun 6 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Light Entertainment

MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS Full theatrical experience featuring 'dynamic choreography and heart-pounding rhythms', Tues 1 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

COMEDY HYPNOSIS & MIND READING SHOW Join Daniel Sinclair for an evening of 'suspense, comedy, music and jaw-dropping moments', Thurs 3 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH PHIL ROSENTHAL OF 'SOMEBODY FEED PHIL' An evening with the award-winning creator, executive producer & bestselling author, Fri 4 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall



ANDY & THE ODD SOCKS Family show featuring a madcap mix of songs, slapstick comedy and silliness, Sat 5 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

LIPSTICK ON YOUR COLLAR Nostalgic show promising back-to-back hits from the 1950s and 60s, Sat 5 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TOMMY BLAIZE: 50 YEARS IN MUSIC Join the Strictly lead singer for an evening of songs and stories, Sat 5 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE CABARET 'An evening of glamour featuring world-class entertainers and stars of stage & screen', Sat 5 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE NIGHT SKY SHOW Astronomer and author Adrian West (aka VirtualAstro) presents a visual and thought-provoking journey around the constellations, stars, planets and more..., Sun 6 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Talks & Spoken Word

MARCIA MICHAEL: ARTIST TALK Professor Pat Noxolo and curator & lecturer Dr Sylvia Theuri join Marcia Michael to discuss how the artist's work challenges representations of the Black body and reimagines family histories, Sat 5 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE REAL MANHUNTER Former Met Police senior investigating officer Colin Sutton shares stories of how he caught some of the UK's most evil murderers, Sat 5 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

Events

EASTER EGG-VENTURE Get your very own Easter passport to guide you through all the fun and games, until Sun 7 Apr, Lower Drayton Farm Staffordshire

SPRING BULB FESTIVAL Enjoy the immersive and colourful experience of taking a walk through the gardens, until Sun 18 May, Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: CELLARS, STORES, AND STATE ROOMS Join the house and collections team on a behind-the-scenes tour of the mansion, Wed 2 Apr, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

MUSEUM LATE - SUN & FIRE TWILIGHT EVENT This family evening at the museum is your chance to explore the exhibition in a party atmosphere, Fri 4 Apr, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

HOT WHEELS MONSTER TRUCKS LIVE: GLOW-N-FIRE Show bringing fans' favourite Hot Wheels Monster Trucks to life, Fri 4 - Sun 6 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS THIS EASTER An egg-stra special Easter celebration, packed with family fun, entertainment, and surprises, Fri 4 - Mon 28 Apr, Drayton Manor, Tamworth, Staffordshire

AFTERNOON WITH THE ARTIST: ARPITA SHAH Join exhibiting artist Arpita Shah to discuss the making of her acclaimed series Modern Muse, Sat 5 Apr, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

RED BY NIGHT Enjoy an evening of live entertainment, industrial demonstrations, steam action and

living history, Sat 5 Apr, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE ANIMAL FAMILY Animal experiences with snakes, spiders and insects, Sat 5 Apr, British Ironworks Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS ARTISAN MARKET A selection of handmade treasures from talented artisans across the country, Sat 5 Apr, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR Discover the world behind the curtain and learn about the story of the Hippodrome, Sat 5 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

LATE NIGHT AT THE MARKET HALL Stalls, bars and eateries open late, Sat 5 Apr, Shrewsbury Market Hall, Shropshire

SHROPSHIRE WAY 80K FESTIVAL With hundreds of runners and walkers coming to the Shropshire Hills, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Apr, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

OPEN WATER LIFEGUARD COURSE Sat 5 - Sun 6 Apr, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, Shropshire

OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND Get a closer look behind the scenes at areas not usually open to visitors, Sat 5 - Sun 6

Apr, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SPRING PLANT FAIR Featuring plants from specialised, family-run nurseries, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

A VERY VICTORIAN EASTER Two special trails for visitors of all ages, Sat 5 - Sun 27 Apr, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

EASTER ADVENTURE QUEST Crack the clues hidden around the grounds and enjoy a delicious chocolate reward, Sat 5 - Sun 27 Apr, Stokesay Castle, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

MR. CADBURY PARROT'S EASTER EGG-STRAVAGANZA STAGE SHOW Mr Cadbury's Parrot becomes the star of his very own show: The Missing Mini-Eggs!, Sat 5 - Sun 27 Apr, Cadbury World, Bournville, Birmingham

SHAUN THE SHEEP FIND THE FLOCK TRAIL Follow the trail to discover 12 supersized and colourful Shaun the Sheep sculptures, painted by local and regional artists, Sat 5 Apr - Sun 18 May, Trentham Estate, Staffordshire

MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOP WITH LINDSAY PRITCHARD Discover a new way to



Red By Night - Black Country Living Museum

make a piece of art, using teabags, mixed media and hot wax, Sun 6 Apr, Coalport China Museum, Ironbridge

MADE IN SHROPSHIRE ARTISAN FAIR Featuring a selection of high-quality and unique art, craft & food stalls, Sun 6 Apr, Dudmaston, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

WEDDING FAYRE Join Ever After Events for a day filled with wedding

inspiration and ideas, Sun 6 Apr, Himley Hall, Dudley

BEAUTY & THE BEAST A meet & greet with Belle and The Beast, Sun 6 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

LONGTON CARNIVAL & PIG WALK PARADE Featuring performance stages, live music, a funfair, street food and an artisan market, Sun 6 Apr, The Strand, Stoke-on-Trent

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Gigs

THE TROOPS OF DOOM Mon 7 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NELL MESCAL Mon 7 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

M HUNCHO Mon 7 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PRIMAL SCREAM Mon 7 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

REG MEUROSS Mon 7 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

HUE & CRY Mon 7 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

AIDAN THORNE AND TOBY HAY Mon 7 Apr, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

PALE BLUE EYES Tues 8 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LITTLE BARRIE + MALCOM CATTO Tues 8 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ALESSI ROSE + CHLOE SLATER Tues 8 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

FRANK TURNER & THE SLEEPING SOULS + AMIGO THE DEVIL Tues 8 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PIGS X7 Tues 8 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

HALLAN Tues 8 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

ALL THINGS MCCARTNEY Tues 8 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

HONEYGLAZE Wed 9 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SPYRES Wed 9 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MARK AMBOR Wed 9 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

VINCENT LIMA + ELINA Wed 9 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

HOTWAX Wed 9 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

LEBROCK + LEX LUGER Wed 9 Apr,

The Flapper, B'ham
RACHEL LAVEN Wed 9 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Wed 9 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE STORY OF GUITAR HEROES Wed 9 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

MORGANWAY Thurs 10 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

UNDER THE RAINBOW MUSIC FESTIVAL 2025 Thurs 10 Apr, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE HAAR Thurs 10 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

EDDIE COCHRAN 65TH ANNIVERSARY SHOW Thurs 10 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

MARQUEE SQUARE HEROES - MARILLION TRIBUTE Thurs 10 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE MUSIC AND SONGS OF PETE WILLIAMS Thurs 10 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

MARISA AND THE MOTHS + BLACK ORCHID EMPIRE Thurs 10 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

IAIN BALLAMY QUARTET FEAT. HUW WARREN Thurs 10 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE MAGIC OF THE BEE GEES Thurs 10 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

ADAM KUBOTA TRIO Thurs 10 Apr, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, North Shropshire

JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW Thurs 10 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

SEA POWER Fri 11 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DIDDY SWEG Fri 11 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

999 Fri 11 Apr, The Dark Horse, Moseley

CHARLOTTE YOUNG Fri

11 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham
SPEAK! + DOROTHY ELLA Fri 11 Apr, The Night Owl, B'ham

KEYWEST Fri 11 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

WOODEN DOG Fri 11 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

CATCH YOUR BREATH + UNTIL I WAKE + OF VIRTUE Fri 11 Apr, The Asylum, B'ham

LAST RESORT Fri 11 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

BLACK COUNTRY, NEW ROAD Fri 11 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

DEFINITELY MIGHT BE VS ADORED Fri 11 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE BEAT FEATURING RANKING JNR Fri 11 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

MAD DOG MCREA Fri 11 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

SMOOVE & TURRELL Fri 11 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, W'hampton

THE ZUTONS + THE COVASETTES Fri 11 Apr, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE FLEETWOOD MAC SONGBOOK Fri 11 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

NATIVE WAY Fri 11 Apr, The Quarter at Potbank, Stoke-on-Trent

SENSATION ABBA TRIBUTE BAND Fri 11 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

DREAMS OF DELVAUX + DISASTROUS ROBOTS Fri 11 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

CREDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW Fri 11 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

FOO FIGHTERS GB Fri 11 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE ONLOOKERS BAND Fri 11 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE HAAR Fri 11 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CHINA CRISIS Fri 11 Apr, Shrewsbury Abbey

GUNS 2 ROSES Fri 11 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE BLUETONES Fri 11 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

PULP FRICTION Fri 11 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

PAUL YOUNG Fri 11 Apr, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, Shropshire

WALTER SMITTY & THE UNVIABLES Sat 12 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HEAVY LUNGS Sat 12 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SKASTUDS Sat 12 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

J.I THE PRINCE OF N.Y + 163MARGS + LAICOSITNA Sat 12 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DAYDREAMERS Sat 12 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE MERCIANS + PARADISE CIRCUS + TEN HANDS HIGH Sat 12 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

HERIOT + GROVE STREET + FALSE REALITY Sat 12 Apr, The Asylum, B'ham

METAL TO THE MASSES HEAT 5 Sat 12 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

SUGABABES Sat 12 Apr, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

DIANA & LIONEL: ENDLESS LOVE THE SHOW Sat 12 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

FRANKIE - THE CONCERT Sat 12 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

WEEKEND ANTHEMS Sat 12 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE COUNTERFEIT STONES Sat 12 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

BIG JIM'S BOOGIE BAND Sat 12 Apr,

Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

RICHARD DIGANCE Sat 12 Apr, Birchmeadow Centre, Broseley

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS Sat 12 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

TOM MCCONVILLE & MICHAEL BIGGINS Sat 12 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

RAMMLIED Sat 12 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

MEAT LOAF BY CANDLELIGHT Sat 12 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

MATRIX CLUB MATRIX Sat 12 Apr, The Quarter at Potbank, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SEARCHERS & HOLLIES EXPERIENCE Sat 12 Apr, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

OH WHAT A NIGHT! THE MUSIC OF FRANKIE VALLI Sat 12 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LINK N PARK Sat 12 Apr, The Station, Cannock

JOHN HACKETT BAND + DIKAJEE Sat 12 Apr, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, North Shropshire

ANATOLE MUSTER Sun 13 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE FALLEN STATE Sun 13 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

EMILIO SANTORO AS ELVIS Sun 13 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SWIFT & STYLES - THE TRIBUTE Sun 13 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THIS WINTER MACHINE Sun 13 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

MICHAEL STARRING BEN Sun 13 Apr, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

SCHOOL OF ROCK WITH TEACHERS PET Sun 13 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT: THOMAS TROTTER (ORGAN) & CATRIN FINCH (HARP) Programme includes works by Handel, Grandjany, Wammes & more..., Mon 7 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DUDLEY PERFORMING ARTS (DPA): FESTIVAL CONCERTS Featuring wind, guitar, keyboard & strings performances by students, Mon 7 - Wed 9 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

ALASTAIR MCGOWAN: PIANO CONCERT Programme includes the work of Erik Satie, Tues 8 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS MAHLER 9 Programme also includes Takemitsu's Requiem, Thurs 10 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME RECITAL: TIM STEWART (ORGAN) Fri 11 Apr, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND Featuring Catherine Rooney (soprano), Clare Horgan (violin) & Richard Walker (piano), Fri 11 Apr, St Chad's Shrewsbury

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND: HEART'S HAVEN Featuring Andrew Hamilton (baritone) & Iain Burnside (piano). Programme includes works by Vaughan Williams, Schubert, Schumann & Mendelssohn, in translations by Jeremy Sams, Fri 11 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND: SONGS OF AULD LANG SYNE Featuring Mhairi Lawson (soprano) & Paula Chateaufort (lute). Programme includes lute songs from the court of King James VI & I, Fri 11 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

CANTIONES CHOIR: MOZART'S CORONATION MASS Featuring Natasha Hendrickse-Welsh (soprano) & Joe Martin (tenor). Tony Coupe conducts accompanied by Stephen Owens, Sat 12 Apr, Christ Church, Oswestry, North Shropshire

SHREWSBURY CHORAL: SPRING CONCERT Featuring Martin Cook (musical director), Juliet Montgomery (soprano), Ruby Hendry (mezzo), Philip O'Connor (tenor) & Samuel Snowden (bass/baritone). Programme includes J S Bach's B Minor Mass, Sat 12 Apr, Shrewsbury Abbey

PHOENIX SINGERS: A CHORAL SERENADE FOR HOLY WEEK Featuring James Llewelyn Jones (musical director), Sat 12 Apr, St Francis of Assisi Church, Bournville, B'ham

BCMG: FREE OPEN REHEARSAL WITH KAZUKI YAMADA Programme includes

works by Fujikura, Chin & Mochizuki, Sat 12 Apr, CBSO Centre, B'ham

CITY OF STOKE-ON-TRENT MALE VOICE CHOIR: SPRING GALA A night of powerful harmonies and uplifting melodies, Sat 12 Apr, Methodist Central Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SHREWSBURY CHORAL: BACH'S B MINOR MASS Featuring Dr Martin Cook (director) & Anne Tupling (leader), Sat 12 Apr, Shrewsbury Abbey

STAFFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: SPRING CONCERT Programme includes works by Puccini & Morten Lauridsen, Sat 12 Apr, Rising Brook Community Church, Stafford

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND: A LOVERS' TIFF Featuring Bethany Horak-Hallett (mezzo), Dan D'Souza (baritone) & Ian Tindale (piano). Programme includes works by Britten, Purcell, A Beach & more..., Sat 12 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND: BUZZ! Featuring Lotte Betts-Dean (mezzo), Brett Dean (viola) & Iain Burnside (piano). Programme includes works by Bridge, A Bliss, Vaughan Williams & more..., Sat 12 Apr, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

LUDLOW ENGLISH SONG WEEKEND: ONE THAT KEPT HIS WORD Featuring Bethany Horak-Hallett (mezzo), Liam Bonthron (tenor), Jolyon Loy (baritone), Iain Burnside (piano) & Alex Jennings (spoken word). A programme exploring the life of A.E. Housman through letters and songs, with works by A Somervell, J Ireland, E Hugh-Jones & more..., Sun 13 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE GESUALDO SIX: LUX AETERNA Programme features music from the Renaissance to the present day, Sun 13 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

Comedy

KURTIS CONNER Tues 8 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

SAMMY OBEID Wed 9 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

THE ALTER COMEDY CLUB Wed 9 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

CLINTON BAPTISTE Wed 9 Apr, Bilston Town Hall

HARRY HILL Wed 9 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

DEIRDRE O'KANE Thurs 10 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, BILLY KIRKWOOD & KATE BARRON Thurs 10 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PATRICK SPICER Thurs 10 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JARRED CHRISTMAS, WILL HANNIGAN,

FAIZAN SHAH & DANNY MCLOUGHLIN Thurs 10 Apr, Hockley Social Club, Birmingham

ANDREW LAWRENCE Thurs 10 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

SHAPARAK KHORSANDI Fri 11 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

JONNY COLE Fri 11 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

AURIE STYLA Fri 11 Apr, Bilston Town Hall

THE AGENDA COMEDY CLUB Fri 11 Apr, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

BILLY KIRKWOOD, KATE BARRON, JACOB HAWLEY & COMIC TBC Fri 11 - Sat 12 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL SMITH Fri 11 - Sat 12 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, ALI WOODS, PAUL PIRIE & DAVE TWENTYMAN Sat 12 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

JONNY COLE Sat 12 - Sun 13 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

GEOFF NORCOTT Sun 13 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

Theatre

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW The return of Richard O'Brien's legendary rock & roll musical, featuring timeless classics Sweet Transvestite, Dammit Janet, The Time Warp and many more..., Mon 7 - Sat 12 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL 2 Featuring tales of lives, loves and losses in a funny and heartfelt look at the 'joys' of menopause. Carli Norris, Maureen Nolan, Rebecca Wheatley and Daniele Coombe star, Tues 8 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

ANIMAL FARM Birmingham Ormiston Academy present an amateur version of George Orwell's satirical novel, Tues 8 - Wed 9 Apr, The Old Rep, Birmingham

YOU KNOW MY MUM Two-act play exploring life and death through the eyes of a baby bird and a 25-year-old Down's Syndrome woman, Tues 8 - Wed 9 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

PIG HEART BOY Stage adaptation of Malorie Blackman's novel, telling the story of 13-year-old Cameron, who just wants to be normal..., Tues 8 - Sat 12 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ANYTHING GOES Lichfield Operatic Society present an amateur version of Cole Porter's shipboard romp, Tues 8 - Sat 12 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY Ambient Night Productions present an amateur version of a two-act play based on the popular TV series, Wed 9 - Thurs 10 Apr, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN The Stoke Rep Players tell the story of a group of spirited D-Day veterans who, confined within the walls of a Brighton nursing home, hatch a plan to break free and return to Normandy's hallowed shores, Tues 8 - Sat 12 Apr, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



GREAT EXPECTATIONS Shrewsbury Youth Theatre present an amateur version of the Charles Dickens classic, Wed 9 - Thurs 10 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ORDINARY DAYS - A MUSICAL The story of four young New Yorkers whose lives intersect as they search for fulfillment, happiness, love... and cabs, Wed 9 - Sun 20 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE MANY LIVES OF PET 1 Stan's Cafe present a complicated comedy that dives deep into the world of plastic, Thurs 10 Apr, The Steam Yard, Stourbridge

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT BRENDA One-woman show based on a true story and highlighting the struggles of many women in today's society, Thurs 10 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

BLYTHE SPIRIT Stourbridge Theatre Company present an amateur version of Noel Coward's famous farce, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

CALENDAR GIRLS Amateur version presented by the Mow Cop Players, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Apr, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

MS RACHEL LIVE TRIBUTE TOUR Interactive live show featuring lots of audience participation for little ones, Fri 11 Apr, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING Michael Longhurst relocates Shakespeare's original rom-com to the world of football, where scandal-filled rivalries could undermine the final result, Sat 12 Apr - Sat 24 May, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Kids Theatre

THE HEARTLESS PRINCESS The Highbury Players present an amateur version of Franklyn Black's fairytale fantasy. Suitable for audiences aged five-plus, Tues 8 - Thurs 17 Apr, Highbury Theatre Centre, Sutton Coldfield

HORRIBLE HISTORIES: TERRIBLE TUDORS & AWFUL EGYPTIANS Family show in which historical figures and events come to life on stage using actors and 3D Bogglevision, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

BING'S BIRTHDAY Brand-new stage show for younger audiences, packed with fun, laughter and surprises, Sat 12 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JULIA DONALDSON'S THE DETECTIVE DOG Puppetry, song and scent technology come together in this stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson's award-winning book, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE SMARTEST GIANT IN TOWN Puppet-filled musical stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson's heart-warming story about friendship and helping those in need, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

DINOSAURS LIVE London's Natural History Museum is out on tour, promising 'a roaring experience like no other!' Sun 13 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PRINCESS LIVE! Hour-long princess pop party featuring favourite fairytale royalty in an all-singing, all-dancing concert show, Sun 13 Apr, Mitchell Arts Centre, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent

Dance

SONGS OF THE BULBUL New dance by Aakash Odedra, inspired by an ancient Sufi myth about a bulbul bird which is captured and held in captivity, Tues 8 - Thurs 10 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

Light Entertainment

TOMMYINNIT: SURVIVAL Join the British YouTuber and Twitch Streamer for an evening of entertainment, Tues 8 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BOX OF FROGS An evening of 'high-octane improvised comedy nonsense', based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 9 Apr, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

BANGERS: A LYRICAL LOVELETTER TO UK GARAGE Part theatre, part gig experience, this celebration of UK garage music features original tracks inspired by R&B and Garage, presented alongside lyrical storytelling, Wed 9 - Thurs 10 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

TOGETHER AT HOME TOUR WITH MICHAEL BALL & ALFIE BOE Fri 11 Apr, bp pluse Live, Birmingham

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD Celebrating a selection of much-

loved musicals, including Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar and many more..., Fri 11 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD Celebrating a selection of much-loved musicals, including Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar and many more..., Sat 12 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

OPERA FOR THE PEOPLE Nicola Mills turns opera on its head in a show described as 'Victoria Wood meets Pavarotti', Sat 12 Apr, Eaton Constantine Village Hall, Nr Atcham, Shrewsbury

OH WHAT A NIGHT! A musical journey through the career of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Sat 12 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

LIGHTS! CAMERA! BRASS! Wellington (Telford) Brass Band celebrate 25 years of playing music from stage & screen, Sat 12 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

TIM RICE: MY LIFE IN MUSICALS Join the internationally renowned lyricist as he reflects on his illustrious career at the heart of musical theatre, Sun 13 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Nostalgic show celebrating the most iconic moments from rock & roll and pop culture, from the 1950s through to the 80s, Sun 13 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

WEST END MAGIC London's longest-running theatre show, featuring a blend of award-winning magic, mind-reading mysteries, comedy and more..., Sun 13 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

MURDER TRIAL TONIGHT III Immersive, fast-paced theatrical experience, bringing true crimes to life - with the audience as members of the jury, Sun 13 Apr, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

Talks & Spoken Word

JOHN POWER - CAST, THE LA'S AND ME Join the Cast frontman as he reflects on his extraordinary career in an acoustic-based show, Wed 9 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

HOLLIE MCNISH - LOBSTER: THE PAPERBACK TOUR Expect strong language and adult content as the acclaimed poet reads from her latest collection *Lobster*, Wed 9 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

SU RICHARDSON: ARTIST TALK Writer & curator Linsey Young and art historian Alexandra Kokoli join Su Richardson to reflect on the *In Stitches* exhibition, Thurs 10 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

HISTORY OF FORENSICS TALK Talk exploring the evolution of forensic techniques, Thurs 10 Apr, West Midlands Police Museum, B'ham

ARTIST BOOK LAUNCH AND TALK: YOU AND I BY BEN SADLER Join the local artist as he discusses his new publication of paintings of fictional gallery-goers, Sat 12 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Events

SPRING WREATH MAKING A spring decoration and wreath-making masterclass, led by Wild Mint Floral Design, Mon 7 Apr, Goldstone Hall, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

MUSEUM TOUR Tour the museum and go behind the scenes, Mon 7 Apr, Lapworth Museum of Geology - Earth Sciences Building, University of Birmingham

THE ANIMAL FAMILY Animal experiences with snakes, spiders and insects, Tues 8 - Wed 9 Apr, British Ironworks Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

BURTON COLLABORATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL Celebrating local art and showcasing talent within the local area, Wed 9 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire

SPRING WREATH MAKING A spring decoration and wreath-making masterclass, led by Wild Mint Floral Design, Thurs 10 Apr, Goldstone Hall, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

JQ BEER FESTIVAL Discover Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter and celebrate all that's wonderful about beer, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Apr, across venues in Jewellery Quarter, B'ham

OPEN WATER LIFEGUARD COURSE Fri 11 Apr, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

DOWNFALL ABBEY An immersive murder-mystery, Fri 11 Apr, Tamworth Castle

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series as you join much-loved characters for a fun tea party, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffordshire

EASTER AT HOCKERHILL ADVENTURE PLAYBARN Explorers can crack the code in a trail that takes them across the playbarn and its outdoor area, Fri 11 - Sat 19 Apr, Hockerhill Adventure Playbarn, Brewood, Staffordshire

VOLUNTEER FAIR Discover a whole host of volunteering opportunities for a wide variety of local organisations, Sat 12 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

THE HUB WINE FESTIVAL Enjoy a relaxed tasting experience, Sat 12 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

SEED SHARE Swap and share vegetable and flower seeds, Sat 12 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek



Dinosaurs Live - Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

STEP INTO STORIES Immersive experience with a bestselling author on the Steam Train Story Carriage, Sat 12 Apr, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

BONGO'S BINGO The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 12 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

EASTER EGG HUNT Make your way along the trail and enjoy family-friendly activities, Sat 12 - Mon 21 Apr, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

CRASH TEST BUNNIES Design a car to carry the Easter Bunny safely along the race track, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Ingenuity, Ironbridge

TIME TRAVEL RESCUE Step aboard your very own floating time machine and travel back 420 million years, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Dudley Canal & Caverns Trust

DRAGON'S EGG TRAIL Explore the castle, find the hidden dragon's eggs, and help reunite them with their mother, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire

EASTER HOLIDAY FUN Put a spring in your step and take part in family fun activities, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

EASTER EGG HUNT Make your way along the trail and enjoy family-friendly activities, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA Join the egg hunts, meet Bramble Bunny, and enjoy a range of themed family-friendly activities, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley

DRAGON EGG HUNT Help Ruby the Dragon find all her eggs around the castle, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Tamworth Castle

LAMBING TALKS Learn about Shugborough's new arrivals, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Shugborough Estate,

Staffordshire

FAIRYTALE EGGSTRAVAGANZA Featuring Easter fun, Alice In Wonderland adventures, and all the animals down on the farm, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Park Hall Countryside Experience, Oswestry, North Shropshire

EASTER TRAIL Fun-filled, self-led trail through the castle's beautiful gardens, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Powys Castle and Garden, Welshpool

PILOT TRAINING Featuring interactive shows, crafts and an Easter egg trail, Sat 12 - Sun 27 Apr, Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford

AFTERNOON TEA WITH MICKEY, MINNIE, DONALD & DAISY Featuring 'your favourite characters, delicious treats and live entertainment', Sun 13 Apr, The Grand Hotel, Birmingham

EASTER CRAFT & GIFT FAIR Featuring food and live music, face painting, a magician, animals and a free-to-participate egg hunt, Sun 13 Apr, Himley Hall, Dudley

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS TOUR Chance to experience life at Weston Park, both as it once was and as it is today, Sun 13 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire

WORLD OF WEDGWOOD ARTISAN MARKET Featuring independent local makers and small businesses from Staffordshire, Sun 13 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Featuring more than 500 stalls packed with thousands of new and old collectables for sale, Sun 13 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

EASTER ADVENTURE Make your way along the trail and find spring-inspired activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sun 13 - Sun 27 Apr, Dudmaston Hall, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

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Gigs

TREACHEROUS CRETINS FEATURING ROBERT 'BOBBY' MARTIN Mon 14 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THOU + MOLOCH Mon 14 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

DAVEY MACMANUS Tues 15 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 15 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

POZER Tues 15 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

IMELDA MAY Tues 15 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC Tues 15 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

CHRIS HELME Wed 16 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THOMAS ATLAS BAND & GUESTS Wed 16 Apr, The Jam House, Birmingham

KELSY KARTER & THE HEROINES Wed 16 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ANGELS OF THE NORTH Wed 16 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE MUSICAL BOX PERFORMS GENESIS LIVE 1973 Wed 16 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

JERRY LEGER Wed 16 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

IMAR Wed 16 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RATS Thurs 17 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WEETWOOD MAC Thurs 17 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

STORRY Thurs 17 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HALLIVES Thurs 17 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ULTHA + ANTEINFERNO Thurs 17 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

OUR MAN IN THE FIELD + MATT OWENS Thurs

17 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

SEVEN WONDERS - FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE Thurs 17 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

LYDONS + DUNE BUG Thurs 17 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS CIRCLE Thurs 17 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

WILD ONES Thurs 17 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE FLEETWOOD MACK EXPERIENCE Thurs 17 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

FRANCIS ROSSI Thurs 17 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MILES HUNT Thurs 17 - Fri 18 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

AMPLIFIER Fri 18 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ANDY BENNETT Fri 18 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

VIO-LENCE + EXHORDER + KUAZAR Fri 18 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

KING NO ONE Fri 18 Apr, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

FRONT LINE ASSEMBLY Fri 18 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

ASHLEY HUTCHINGS 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION Fri 18 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

CENTRAL CEE Fri 18 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

EMO FESTIVAL Fri 18 Apr, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

TRICKY BUSINESS + THE FESTOONS + CONOR WINTERS Fri 18 Apr, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE ELVIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE DIXIE ROCK N ROLL BAND Fri 18 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE ELVIS YEARS - THE STORY OF THE KING Fri 18 Apr, Stourbridge



Imelda May - Birmingham Town Hall

Town Hall

OLIVIA RODRIGO, SABRINA CARPENTER TRIBUTES Fri 18 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

THE ELO ENCOUNTER Fri 18 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

LOVE DISTRACTION - THE HUMAN LEAGUE TRIBUTE Fri 18 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

I'M EVERY WHITNEY Fri 18 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

COUNTRY SUPERSTARS Fri 18 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE REALLY HOT CHILI PEPPERS Fri 18 Apr, The Station, Cannock

LUNA WAVES Fri 18 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE GERRY CINNAMAN EXPERIENCE Fri 18 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE SALOPIAN MIXTAPE Fri 18 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

ONSHORE Sat 19 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FAYE SMITH Sat 19 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

LOS FASTIDIOS Sat 19 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

CHUCKIE & TAZER'S RNB & SLOW JAMS EXPERIENCE Sat 19 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLACK SPIDERS Sat 19 Apr, The Asylum,

Birmingham

COBRA THE IMPALER + HIPPOTRAKTOR Sat 19 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

SEAN PAUL + ASHANTI Sat 19 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THE LITTLE MIX SHOW Sat 19 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

KILLERSTREAM Sat 19 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

A TRIBUTE TO WHITNEY HOUSTON Sat 19 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

ESSENTIAL 80S VS 90 Sat 19 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DAFT PUNKZ + PRETENDULUM Sat 19 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

ALL FOR JOLLY Sat 19 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

JACK J HUTCHINSON + MATT PEARCE & THE MUTINY Sat 19 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

TOPLOADER Sat 19 Apr, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent



FOO FIGHTERS GB Sat 19 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SOUND OF SPRINGSTEEN Sat 19 Apr, Stafford

Gatehouse Theatre

TONY CHRISTIE Sat 19 Apr, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

HELLBENT FOREVER AND MOTORKILL Sat 19 Apr, The Station, Cannock

FAKERMAKER - OASIS TRIBUTE Sat 19 Apr, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE BOB DYLAN STORY Sat 19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RENEGADES Sat 19 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

GOOD TO GO Sat 19 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

NUBIYAN TWIST + WEBMOMS Sun 20 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

VADER + RISE OF KRONOS + SKAPHOS Sun 20 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

ALT BLK ERA Sun 20 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

HAWKWIND Sun 20 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GHOST Sun 20 Apr, Utilita Arena B'ham

CERI JUSTICE & THE JURY Sun 20 Apr, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

PURE MCCARTNEY Sun 20 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

DIRTY DC Sun 20 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE INNOCENT CRIMINALS Sun 20 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA: TO THE BEAT Programme includes works by Stravinsky, Higdon & Bernstein, Mon 14 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS RAVEL & POULENC Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor), Fazil Say (piano), Eleanor Lyons (soprano) & CBSO Chorus, Wed 16 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: CHAUSSON'S CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN, PIANO & STRINGS Featuring Eugene Tzikiandean, Lowri Porter & Amy Jones (violins), David BaMaung (viola), Arthur Boutillier (cello) & Maria Linares Molero (piano), Thurs 17 Apr, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: GOOD FRIDAY BACH'S ST MATTHEW PASSION Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Ex Cathedra Baroque Orchestra & Academy of Vocal Music, Fri 18 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

LAUREN PATTISON Tues 15 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SEAN MCLOUGHLIN Tues 15 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

NABIL ABDULRAHID Tues 15 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



ANDREW BIRD Wed 16 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, AMY MATTHEWS & COMIC TBC Thurs 17 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MICK MILLER Thurs 17 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

ALEX KEALY, ROB ROUSE, AMY MATTHEWS & DANNY CLIVES Fri 18 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOM LAWRIinson Fri 18 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LINDSEY SANTORO, HANNAH PLATT, LEROY BRITO & JON PEARSON Sat 19 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

ALEX KEALY, ROB ROUSE, AMY MATTHEWS & MUHSHIN YESILADA Sat 19 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham



Do I Love You? - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ALFIE MOORE Sat 19 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

LAWRENCE CHANEY Sun 20 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

CHICAGO Strictly's Janette Manrara makes her musical theatre debut as Roxie Hart in a story of murder, greed, corruption and exploitation. Also starring Brenda Edwards as Mama Morton and Djalenga Scott as Velma Kelly, Mon 14 - Sat 19 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES Colin Baker (Doctor Who) & Terry Molloy (Mike Tucker in the Archers) join forces to play the world's most famous detectives - Sherlock Holmes & Doctor Watson, Tues 15 Apr, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

DO I LOVE YOU? John Godber's 'dramatic gem' tells the story of three twentysomethings who develop a love for Northern Soul, Tues 15 - Wed 16 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KINKY BOOTS Award-winning musical inspired by the true story of a failing Northamptonshire shoe factory. Strictly's Johannes Radebe stars, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

SIX THE MUSICAL From Tudor queens to pop princesses, the six wives of Henry VIII take to the mic to tell their tales, remixing 500 years of historical heartbreak into an 80-minute celebration of 21st-century girl power, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Apr, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JEKYLL AND HYDE THE MUSICAL Amateur version presented by Coppice Performing Arts School, Wed 16 - Thurs 17 Apr, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

DRACULA Blackeyed Theatre present Bram Stoker's Gothic thriller, Wed 16 - Thurs 17 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

TITUS ANDRONICUS Simon Russell Beale takes the lead in Max Webster's reimagining of Shakespeare's bloodiest play, Thurs 17 Apr - Sat 7 June, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

DRACULA Blackeyed Theatre present Bram Stoker's Gothic thriller, Fri 18 - Sat 19 Apr, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

SINGIN' I'M NO A BILLY, HE'S A TIM Des Dillon's acclaimed play, exploring bigotry and ethnic identity, Sat 19 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Kids Theatre

THE FROG PRINCE Spring panto packed with songs, slapstick, silliness, audience participation and fairytale magic, Mon 14 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

STORIES IN THE DUST Live music and puppetry combine in a funny, heartfelt and hopeful eco-fable that promises to take young audiences on a journey to another world, Mon 14 Apr, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

THE WIZARD OF OZ Polka Dot Pantomimes present an Easter adventure with Dorothy and her trusted friends, The Scarecrow, The Tinman and the Cowardly Lion, Mon 14 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

DANTASTIC'S PIRATE ADVENTURE A 'swashbuckling comedy musical-theatre adventure' for younger audiences, Mon 14 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THERE'S A MONSTER IN YOUR SHOW High-energy family adventure in which favourite characters from Tom Fletcher's books come to life on stage, Mon 14 - Tues 15 Apr, Lichfield Garrick

THE LITTLE MERMAID Immersion Theatre present a new version of the underwater adventure, Mon 14 - Tues 15 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

STORIES IN THE DUST Live music and

puppetry combine in a funny, heartfelt and hopeful eco-fable that promises to take young audiences on a journey to another world, Tues 15 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE LITTLEST YAK A musical version of Lu Fraser & Kate Hindley's award-winning children's book, which celebrates 'being perfect... just the way you are...', Tues 15 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE AMAZING BUBBLE MAN Louis Pearl - one of the world's leading bubbleologists - hosts an entertaining show for younger audiences, Wed 16 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE GREAT BALDINI FAMILY MAGIC SHOW Joyously silly romp showcasing two magical superstars at the peak of their powers, Wed 16 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

STORIES IN THE DUST Live music and puppetry combine in a funny, heartfelt and hopeful eco-fable that promises to take young audiences on a journey to another world, Wed 16 Apr, SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, Shropshire

THE WIZARD OF OZ Polka Dot Pantomimes present an Easter adventure with Dorothy and her trusted friends, The Scarecrow, The Tinman and the Cowardly Lion, Thurs 17 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

RUDE SCIENCE LIVE A high-tech, highly explosive show packed with outrageous science stunts. Expect enormous bottoms, fart machines, snot cocktails, vast whoopee cushions and pee-powered fireworks, Sat 19 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Light Entertainment

DERREN BROWN: ONLY HUMAN Brand-new show from the award-winning master of mind control and psychological illusion, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



JEFF WAYNE'S THE WAR OF THE WORLDS - ALIVE ON STAGE! Starring The Wanted's Max George, EastEnders' Maisie Smith and Busted's Charlie Simpson. The production also features Liam Neeson in 3D holography as The

Journalist, Fri 18 Apr, bp pulse Live, Birmingham

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD Celebrating a selection of much-loved musicals, including Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar and many more..., Fri 18 Apr, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

CRAIG REVEL HORWOOD An evening of 'big songs, tall tales and glamour', Fri 18 Apr, Lichfield Garrick



An evening of 'big songs, tall tales and glamour', Sun 20 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

Events

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series as you join much-loved characters for a fun tea party, Mon 14 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffordshire

LEGO CREATURE WORKSHOP Create your own wild creature using Lego kits, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

WILD WONDER SHOW Find out about amazing creatures and discover their remarkable adaptations, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

CLAY CLUB POTTER'S WHEEL CLASS Thirty-minute potter's wheel session, providing children with the chance to get hands-on with clay, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

THE STICK MAN EASTER FAMILY ACTIVITIES Stick Man-themed activities, from arts & crafts to outdoor trails in the spring woodland, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire

DECORATING STUDIO: POTTERY PAINTING Choose from various shapes and sizes to paint, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

CLAY CLUB FACTORY TOUR Little ones get the chance to see behind the scenes of the working Wedgwood Factory, Mon 14 - Fri 18 Apr, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

EASTER EGG HUNT Follow an interactive trail through the gardens of Chirk Castle as you help a courageous hare on its journey to safety, Mon 14 - Sun 27 Apr, Chirk Castle, Wrexham

LAMBING LIVE Witness the rare-breed

Monday 14 - Sunday 20 April

sheep being brought into the world by Trentham's farmer, Mon 14 - Sun 27 Apr, Trentham Estate, Staffordshire

EASTER EGG HUNT Solve puzzles, tackle challenges and follow the trail to the legendary pot of gold, Mon 14 - Sun 27 Apr, Erddig Hall, Wrexham

DUSK BEAVER SAFARI Get a closer look at Trentham's famous residents: the beavers, Mon 14 - Tues 29 Apr, Trentham Estate, Staffordshire

MOSAIC MASTERPIECES A hands-on mosaic-making workshop, Tues 15 Apr, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

STORYTELLING SESSIONS Listen to Bible stories being retold by Lichfield storyteller Christine Genders, Tues 15 - Wed 16 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

MYTHS AND LEGENDS Explore the Roman gallery, handle Roman artefacts and create your own clay tile, inspired by Roman myths and legends, Thurs 17 Apr, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

COUNTRYTASTIC Hands-on event celebrating farming and the countryside, Thurs 17 Apr, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

EASTER EGG HUNT Explore the

galleries, search high and low for hidden eggs, and discover the wonders of glassmaking, Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

ALICE'S EASTERLAND ADVENTURE Step into a wonderland of nature, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 Apr, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CHICK HANDLING Join the farming team in the hatchery for a hands-on experience. Get to know the new arrivals and learn how to take care of them, Thurs 17 - Tues 22 Apr, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

TUNNEL TOUR Explore the fascinating tunnels beneath the museum and delve into the rich history of the Stuart crystal factory that once stood on the site, Fri 18 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series as you join much-loved characters for a fun tea party, Fri 18 - Sat 19 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffordshire

SPRING STEAM GALA Featuring both guest and home locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Hampton Loade, Fri 18 - Mon 21 Apr, Severn Valley



Stick Man Easter Family Activities - National Memorial Arboretum

Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

EASTER EGG SUN CATCHER CRAFT

Children can decorate their very own egg-shaped sun catcher to take home and display, Sat 19 Apr, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BONGO'S BINGO The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 19 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

STAFFORDSHIRE SHAKESPEARE DAY

Charity fundraiser featuring performances from Hour Shakespeare and Staffordshire Shakespeare Society, Sat 19 Apr, Oddfellows Hall, Stafford

ENCHANTED EASTER EGG HUNT Help the Easter Bunny collect all the dragon eggs and return them to the cave, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Apr, Hawkstone Park, North Shropshire

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Gigs

FINNEAS + HOHNEN
FORD Mon 21 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PLAYSTATION: THE CONCERT Mon 21 Apr, Utilita Arena B'ham

EMPLOYED TO SERVE + CELESTIAL SANCTUARY + BURNER Mon 21 Apr, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC Mon 21 - Tues 22 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham
JACKSON DEAN Tues 22 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

SINGLE MOTHERS + OTHER HALF Tues 22 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

SBT Tues 22 Apr, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

BAMBARA Wed 23 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SKEETE Wed 23 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MATILDA MANN Wed 23 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MARTIN STEPHENSON Wed 23 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ELO EXPERIENCE Wed 23 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GUTTERSNIPE Wed 23 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

GREGORY PORTER Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham



THE CINELLI BROTHERS Thurs 24 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GOUDIES + KYLIE PRICE Thurs 24 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

FALSE HEADS Thurs 24 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ELLIOT MINOR Thurs 24 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

THROWN + CRYSTAL LAKE + UNITY TX + GRAPHIC NATURE Thurs 24 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

THROWN + EXCESSIVE

GUILT Thurs 24 Apr, YOYO, Digbeth, B'ham

ASTRID WILLIAMSON Thurs 24 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THE SABRINA CARPENTER EXPERIENCE Thurs 24 Apr, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

THE EMINEM SHOW Thurs 24 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

ROGER DALTRY Thurs 24 Apr, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

RICHARD THOMPSON Thurs 24 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ENGLISHMAN IN NEW YORK - VERY BEST OF STING Thurs 24 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE MERSEY BEATLES Thurs 24 Apr, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

THE DRIFTERS Thurs 24 Apr, Aston Hall, Wrexham

GOOD SAD HAPPY BAD Fri 25 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JACKSON HOMER Fri 25 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SEAN REEVES Fri 25 Apr, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

DEFINITELY OASIS Fri 25 Apr, The Dark Horse, Moseley, Birmingham

GREENTEA PENG Fri 25 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE FLAMING LIPS Fri 25 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PEARL SCAM + ANGRY HAIR Fri 25 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MOMENTS OF PLEASURE Fri 25 Apr, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SATINDER SARTAAJ Fri 25 Apr, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THE GEORGE MICHAEL SINGERS Fri 25 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

PROMISES AND LIES - THE UB40 YEARS Fri 25 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

ULTIMATE BOY BANDS Fri 25 Apr, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

PINK LIVE FT. VICKY

JACKSON Fri 25 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

AUDIOSHIFTERS 90S V OOS Fri 25 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE MACHINE RAGES ON + BEAST DECOYS + CYPRISS HILL Fri 25 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

HEADWIRED Fri 25 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

THE SUPERSKAS Fri 25 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

GORDON HENDRICKS AS ELVIS Fri 25 Apr, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

MANIC STREET PREACHERS Fri 25 Apr, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton



GLORY DAYS - BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN TRIBUTE Fri 25 Apr, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ACCELER8 BAND Fri 25 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

JON DORAN AND THE NORTHERN ASSEMBLY Fri 25 Apr, The Albion, Burton upon Trent

THE REAL THING Fri 25 Apr, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE OVERTONES Fri 25 Apr, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

AIRIGHT 80S Fri 25 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE RESIDENTS Fri 25 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

NEW PURPLE CELEBRATION Fri 25 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

IAN PROWSE & AMSTERDAM Fri 25 Apr, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE OUTLAWS COUNTRY BAND Fri 25 Apr, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

THE REMI HARRIS HOT CLUB TRIO Fri 25 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South



The Kilkennys - Halesowen Town Hall

Shropshire

AND FINALLY... PHIL COLLINS Fri 25 Apr, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

BARN54 Fri 25 Apr, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

ELLE-J WALTERS BAND Fri 25 - Sat 26 Apr, The Jam House, B'ham

RON'S NEIGHBOURS Sat 26 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MATILDA PRATT Sat 26 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE COURETTES Sat 26 Apr, The Night Owl, Birmingham

JAWS Sat 26 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NATI. Sat 26 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE + CHANGING MAN Sat 26 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JUST FRIENDS + CHAIN Sat 26 Apr, The Flapper, Birmingham

LIONEL: THE MUSIC OF LIONEL RICHIE Sat 26 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

THE GREATEST STAR - BARBARA STREISAND Sat 26 Apr, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

CHRIS CONNOR AS ELVIS Sat 26 Apr, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

THE KILKENNYS Sat 26 Apr, Halesowen Town Hall

THE SUBTERRANEANS Sat 26 Apr, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

NEW PURPLE CELEBRATION Sat 26 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

THE CLONE ROSES + OAS-IS + THE SMITHS LTD Sat 26 Apr, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

MAN IN THE MIRROR - MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE Sat 26 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE ILLEGAL EAGLES Sat 26 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ION MAIDEN Sat 26 Apr, The Station, Cannock

THE BLACK CHARADE + FELL OUT BOY Sat 26 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

HANNAH BRINE Sat 26 Apr, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, North Shropshire



BENEFITS Sun 27 Apr, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

ED TUDOR-POLE Sun 27 Apr, The Dark Horse, Moseley, B'ham

GOLDIE Sun 27 Apr, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

BLIND GIRLS Sun 27 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

JUST MY IMAGINATION: THE MUSIC OF THE TEMPTATIONS Sun 27 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

ANT-TROUBLE Sun 27 Apr, The Robin, Bilston

SOPHIE GILBERT Sun 27

Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

NEWTON FAULKNER Sun 27 Apr, The Sugarhill, Stoke-on-Trent

RICH PARSONS Sun 27 Apr, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE SHIRES Sun 27 Apr, Aston Hall, Wrexham

ANASTACIA Mon 28 Apr, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE SCRIBES Tues 29 Apr, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RAZORLIGHT Tues 29 Apr, O2 Institute, B'ham

VIAGRA BOYS Tues 29 Apr, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DOLLYROTS & DONT PANIC Tues 29 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

ORCHARDS Tues 29 Apr, The Flapper, B'ham

TARA MACLEAN Tues 29 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

OSLO TWINS Wed 30 Apr, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE WELLERMAN Wed 30 Apr, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NEVER EASY + LASTELLE Wed 30 Apr, The Asylum, Birmingham

CIGARETTES & CIDER Wed 30 Apr, The Victoria, Birmingham

ANDREW COMBS Wed 30 Apr, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

TRANSATLANTIC HOT CLUB Wed 30 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

Classical Music

PAM KIJORAN PIANO RECITAL Tues 22 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

LUMAS WINDS Featuring Beth Stone (flute), Chris Vetraino (oboe), Rennie Sutherland (clarinet), Flo Plane (bassoon) & Benjamin Hartnell-Booth (horn). Programme includes works by Glinka, Bach, A Beach & more...., Wed 23 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

ACCELER8 BRASS BAND Fri 25 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

DANIEL GREENWAY ORGAN PROM Programme includes works by J S Bach, Vaughan Williams, Verdi & more...., Sat 26 Apr, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SHREWSBURY CANTATA CHOIR: BRAHMS' A GERMAN REQUIEM Featuring Anthony Coupe (conductor), Shrewsbury Symphonia, Gemma King & Piran Legg (soloists), Sat 26 Apr, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

MARKET DRAYTON CHORAL SOCIETY: CARMINA COMICA A brand new humorous choral work featuring words by local author Chris Lowe and music by Colin Sell, Sat 26 Apr, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT GUEST RECITAL: JAMES MCVINNIE Programme includes works by Stanford, Muhly, Whitlock & more...., Mon 28 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

LUNCHTIME CONCERT Featuring Will Smith (tenor) & Simon Bate (piano), Tues 29 Apr, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CATHY LAMB ORGAN RECITAL Tues 29 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

Comedy

CHRIS MCCAUSLAND Tues 22 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

WELCOME TO HELL LIVE: WITH DANIEL FOX & DANE BUCKLEY Wed 23 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SEANN WALSH, MIKE RICE, JENNY ART & FREDDY QUINNE Wed 23 Apr, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

ADAM ROWE & SOME OF HIS MATES Wed 23 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

CHRIS MCCAUSLAND Wed 23 Apr, Aston Hall, Wrexham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, CARL HUTCHINSON & JACKIE FABULOUS Thurs 24 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KIELL SMITH-BYNOE & FRIENDS: KOOL STORY BRO Fri 25 Apr, Birmingham Town Hall

PETE OTWAY, RAY BRADSHAW, CARL HUTCHINSON, JACKIE FABULOUS & KATE BUTCH Fri 25 Apr, The Glee Club,

Birmingham

LOUISE YOUNG Fri 25 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUSSELL HICKS Fri 25 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

STEVE ROYLE, TONY COWARDS, LOUISE LEIGH & INGRID DAHLE Fri 25 Apr, Crewe Lyceum

ROB ROUSE, KRIS DAVIES, AARON SIMMONDS & TOM TOAL Sat 26 Apr, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

CARL HUTCHINSON & AL STEVENSON Sat 26 Apr, The Glee Club, B'ham

PETE OTWAY, RAY BRADSHAW, CARL HUTCHINSON & JACKIE FABULOUS Sat 26 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CLINTON BAPTISTE Sat 26 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

ANGELOS EPITHIMIOU & WAYNE BEESE Sat 26 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

FUN! WITH BARBARA NICE Sat 26 Apr, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

MATT BRAGG, FIONA ALLEN, STEVE ROYLE & TONY VINO Sat 26 Apr, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

AL MURRAY Sat 26 Apr, Aston Hall, Wrexham

NOTHING BUT LAUGHTER, OLD-SKOOL MEETS NEW-SKOOL Sun 27 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HARRY HILL Sun 27 Apr, The Alexandra, Birmingham

REG D HUNTER Sun 27 Apr, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge



RUSSELL KANE Sun 27 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ABI CLARKE Tues 29 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SIMON MUNNERY Wed 30 Apr, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RICHARD HERRING Wed 30 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

Theatre

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS Little Theatre Company present an amateur version of the cult rock & roll musical, Tues 22 - Sat 26 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

& JULIET Jay McGuinness and Ranj Singh star in the award-winning musical, which flips the script on the greatest love story ever told, Tues 22 Apr - Sat 3 May, Birmingham Hippodrome



Fun! With Barbara Nice - Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

MIDDLE David Eldridge's play is a 'raw, touching and funny portrait of a 21st-century marriage', Thurs 24 Apr, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

LADIES DAY Amateur version of Amanda Whittington's comedy, Thurs 24 - Sat 26 Apr, The Little Theatre, Donnington

THE POCKET DREAM Sam Rabone and Ben Thornton lead the cast in Sandi Toksvig & Elly Brewer's reimagining of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, Thurs 24 Apr - Sat 3 May, Lichfield Garrick

STEPTOE & SON - LIVE! Featuring four episodes from the iconic BBC television series, performed live on stage, Fri 25 Apr, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

CARRIE THE MUSICAL Amateur version presented by Gatehouse Youth Theatre Performance, Musical Theatre Group, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE NAUGHTY CARRIAGE ON THE ORPHAN TRAIN British Youth Music Theatre present a new musical about making your own version of family, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Apr, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE HAUNTING OF BLAINE MANOR An 'edge-of-the-seat thriller' set in a manor with a twisted history of madness, witchcraft, tragedy and death...., Sat 26 Apr, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE STORY FORGE: MAKE YOUR OWN MYTH Rubbish Shakespeare Company and Silly History Boys present an hour-long high-octane adventure featuring clowning, storytelling, live music and more... Suitable for children and childish adults, Sun 27 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO WIDOWHOOD A dark-but- uplifting one-woman show exploring the experiences of young widows, loss, and why it's okay to

talk about death, Tues 29 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN Louisa Lytton stars as Rachel Watson in the stage version of Paula Hawkins' bestselling novel of the same name, Tues 29 Apr - Sat 3 May, The Alexandra, B'ham

PICTURE YOU DEAD George Rainsford (Call The Midwife), Peter Ash (Coronation Street, War Horse) and Fiona Wade (2:22 A Ghost Story) star in a brand-new Peter James stage adaptation, Tues 29 Apr - Sat 3 May, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES Alan Ayckbourn's suburban comedy brings together five birthdays, two unhappy marriages and one possessive mother. Performed by London Classic Theatre, Tues 29 Apr - Sat 3 May, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

BUFF Solo-performed play reflecting on body-image pressures, social-media jealousy and one gay man's journey to self-acceptance...., Wed 30 Apr - Fri 2 May, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

HABEAS CORPUS The Lichfield Players present an amateur version of Alan Bennett's 'farical merry-go-round of mistaken identities and amorous encounters', Wed 30 Apr - Sat 3 May, Lichfield Garrick

Kids Theatre

MILKSHAKE! LIVE ON HOLIDAY All-new adventure for younger audiences, featuring show favourites Smurfette, Dora, Pip and Posy, Blue from Blues Clues and You!, Milo and Milkshake! Monkey, Tues 22 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

FINDING NEMO JR. Get Your Wigle On present an amateur version of the heartwarming tale of perseverance, friendship and bravery, Tues 22 - Wed 23 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE MOUNTAIN WITCH An 'inclusive, joyous experience' for children aged between three and eight, Wed 23 Apr, Leintwardine Community Centre, Herefordshire / Shropshire border

BING'S BIRTHDAY Brand-new stage show for younger audiences, packed with fun, laughter and surprises, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CINDERELLA ICE CREAM SELLER Little Seeds Music blend storytelling, live music and theatrical magic in a new musical version of the classic fairytale, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

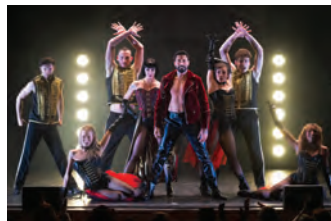
THE STORY FORGE: MAKE YOUR OWN MYTH Rubbish Shakespeare Company and Silly History Boys present an hour-long high-octane adventure featuring clowning, storytelling, live music and more... Suitable for children and childish adults, Fri 25 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

A BIG EGG The People's Theatre Company fuse live action, animation and puppetry in a family musical that's 'guaranteed to delight egg lovers, chocolate lovers and chocolate egg lovers alike', Sat 26 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

PINOCCHIO Easter panto presented by Anton Benson Productions, Sun 27 Apr, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

Dance

GIOVANNI: THE LAST DANCE The Italian maestro returns to the stage, accompanied by an ensemble of world-class dancers, Fri 25 Apr, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



COPPELIA The English Youth Ballet present the story of Dr Coppélius and his creation of a beautiful, life-like doll, Fri 25 - Sat 26 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



TORVILL & DEAN: OUR LAST DANCE Join the ice skating legends as they embark on their last-ever tour

together, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Apr, bp pulse Live, Birmingham

INTENSITY Annual showcase presented by Young Ones Dance Centre, Mon 28 Apr, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Light Entertainment

KATE BUTCH: WUTHERING SHITES Jukebox musical based on the songs of Kate Bush, Wed 23 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

PULL MY GOLDFINGER A fresh take on a modern classic for fans of the James Bond franchise, Thurs 24 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

PUPPET SPECTACULAR GLOW SHOW Hour-long UV puppet show featuring a cast of characters promising to delight audiences of all ages, Thurs 24 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BINGO & THE CITY WITH SAMANTHA GROANS Tracey Collins returns with a brand-new musical comedy bingo extravaganza, Fri 25 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DREAMCOAT STARS Keith Jack and other stars of Joseph sing 'the biggest musical hits of a generation', Fri 25 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

VICTOR AND ALBERT: PURVEYORS OF FINE MUSICAL COMEDY Join identical twins Professor Victor and Dr Albert for an evening of riotous comedy, audience interaction, original songs, games, mayhem and a sprinkling of magic, Fri 25 Apr, Beckbury Village Hall, Shifnal, Shropshire

GUENTHER STEINER LIVE: UNFILTERED Buckle up for an all-access evening with former Haas F1 team principal Guenther Steiner, star of Netflix's smash-hit docuseries Drive To Survive, Fri 25 Apr, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

WICKED SING-ALONG Cinematic experience during which audience members can sing along to the film's classic score, Fri 25 Apr, Dudley Town Hall

BOTTOMS UP: BURLESQUE & CABARET 'The creme de la creme of the cabaret world take to the stage to surprise and delight with sultry striptease, witty wisecracks and saucy songs', Sat 26 Apr, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE MUSIC OF BOND James Bond movie themes, performed by a symphony orchestra and vocalists, Sat 26 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

VICTOR AND ALBERT: PURVEYORS OF FINE MUSICAL COMEDY Join identical twins Professor Victor and Dr Albert for an evening of riotous comedy, audience interaction, original songs, games, mayhem and a sprinkling of

magic, Sat 26 Apr, Clungunford Village Hall, South Shropshire

MAGICAL BONES Action-packed illusion show from the Britain's Got Talent finalist and Ultimate Magician runner-up, Sat 26 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ALED JONES: FULL CIRCLE An evening with the original classical crossover star, Sun 27 Apr, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

VICTOR AND ALBERT: PURVEYORS OF FINE MUSICAL COMEDY Join identical twins Professor Victor and Dr Albert for an evening of riotous comedy, audience interaction, original songs, games, mayhem and a sprinkling of magic, Sun 27 Apr, Habberley Village Hall, Shropshire

THE RAINER HERSCH ORKESTRA Comedy meets orchestra in a performance featuring maestro comedian Rainer Hersch and special guest Alistair McGowan, Sun 27 Apr, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BOX OF FROGS An evening of 'high-octane improvised comedy nonsense', based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 30 Apr, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

Talks & Spoken Word

LEMN SISSAY LET THE LIGHT POUR IN Poetry-reading evening with one of Britain's most celebrated contemporary voices, Thurs 24 Apr, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire



LEMN SISSAY: LET THE LIGHT POUR IN LIVE Poetry-reading evening with one of Britain's most celebrated contemporary voices, Sat 26 Apr, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

Events

HOO-FEST 2025: COMIC-CON ON THE ZOO Mon 21 Apr, Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World, Telford

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY Immerse yourself in Lewis Carroll's beloved book series as you join much-loved characters for a fun tea party, Mon 21 Apr, Churnet Valley Railway, Froghall, Staffordshire

LEGO CREATURE WORKSHOP Create your own wild creature using Lego

kits, Mon 21 - Fri 25 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

WILD WONDERS SHOW Find out about amazing creatures and discover their remarkable adaptations, Mon 21 - Fri 25 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

ALLSTAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING Some of the world's very best wrestlers showcase their skills, Tues 22 Apr, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

EARTH DAY 2025 Celebrate Earth Day by getting 'hands-on with marine wonders', Tues 22 Apr, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

STORYTELLING SESSIONS Listen to Bible stories being retold by Lichfield storyteller Christine Genders, Tues 22 Apr, Lichfield Cathedral

PRIMARY SCHOOL BANGERS BRUNCH Featuring popular primary school assembly classics, Sat 26 Apr, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

INTERNATIONAL LIVING HISTORY FESTIVAL Featuring hands-on activities, a historically themed market and re-enactors, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Apr, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove



MODEL WORLD LIVE Featuring 150-plus stands bringing together 'the very best in modelling', Sat 26 - Sun 27 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

ST GEORGE'S DAY A celebration of the legend of St George in the castle courtyard, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Apr, Dudley Zoo & Castle

THE INTERNATIONAL CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE SHOW A celebration of classic and vintage motorcycles from around the world, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Apr, Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford

DAY OUT WITH ALICE AND FRIENDS Enjoy unlimited travel on the railway whilst meeting Alice and her Wonderland friends, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Apr, Telford Steam Railway, Shropshire

UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS TOUR A rare chance to experience life at Weston Park, both as it once was and as it is today, Sun 27 Apr, Weston Park, Shropshire / Staffordshire border

WOMEN'S HEALTH FESTIVAL Event aimed at educating and empowering women by connecting them with local health services in a creative and inclusive space, Wed 30 Apr, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire

LIVE!
SHREWSBURY

THE BUTTERMARKE SHREWSBURY

SHROPSHIRE'S BIGGEST LIVE MUSIC & EVENTS VENUE



FLEETING RUMOURS
GREATEST HITS TOUR
SPECIAL GUESTS
TOTO UK
FEATURING: "AFRICA"
"ROXANNE" & "HOLD THE LINE"
FRI 4 APRIL

THE ULTIMATE FEEL GOOD PARTY
ALL DAY
4-9PM
THE
90's
REVIVAL
SAT 5 APRIL
BRING IN THE BIGGEST HITS BY THE 90's

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Meet & Greet with
WILLE AND THE BEAST
SUN 6 APRIL

THE WORLD'S NO.1 GUNS N' ROSES LIVE TRIBUTE
★★★★★
FRI 11 APRIL
GUNS2ROSES

School of Rock
THE ORIGINAL SCHOOL OF ROCK LIVE TRIBUTE BAND
★★★★★
SUN 13 APRIL

THE
GERRY CINNAMAN EXPERIENCE
Built The Berry
FRI 18 APRIL

THE MUSIC OF *Prince*
FRI 25 APRIL
PURPLE CELEBRATION

THE **BLACK CHARIE** & **FELL OUT BOY**
SAT 26 APRIL

SHAWN RYDER
SUN 27 APRIL

SUBVERT LOOP fest
BILLINJA
MARQUEE TROUS
BENNUL
ESCAPE / JAY DUBZ
FRI 2 MAY

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF
CHRIS STAPLETON
SUN 4 MAY
STARRING:
CHRIS STAPLETON UK
& HIS LIVE BAND

Spiritual Psychic Night
An audience with
Marilyn & Tia
WED 7 MAY

BOYZLIFE
THE HITS OF BOYZONE & WESTLIFE
THURS 8 MAY

THE WORLD'S BEST
P!NK
TRIBUTE SHOW
Vicky Jackson
& HER FULL LIVE BAND!
FRI 9 MAY

A CELEBRATION OF BOB MARLEY
ONE LOVE
FEATURING
THE MARLEY EXPERIENCE
BOB MARLEY'S NO.1 TRIBUTE BAND
SAT 10 MAY

THE DEFINITIVE TRIBUTE TO QUEEN
DON'T STOP QUEEN NOW
FRI 16 MAY
"Sounds just like Freddie"
Alan Lambert
"Love the band... atmosphere was explosive!"
Jon Jenkins

BRUNCH CLUB SAT 17 MAY
90s BABY
BRUNCH

40 YEARS OF
ERASURE
SAT 17 MAY
PLUS SPECIAL GUEST
ANDREW CHURCH
ERASURE'S FIRST TRIBUTE

AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH...
Paul Young
SUN 18 MAY

TAYLOR SWIFT & OLIVIA RODRIGO
TRIBUTE
FRI 23 MAY

MORGAN WALLEN
TRIBUTE UK
SUN 25 MAY

BEASTIE BOYS & **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE**
TRIBUTE: BEAST BOOYS & TRIBUTE: THE MACHINE BOOYS ON
RHYME AND REASON 2023
FRI 30 MAY
THE TOUR THAT NEVER HAPPENED!

IN THE CELLARS
Shrewsbury
70s Disco 80s Pop
Day Disco
SAT 31 MAY

SPECIAL KINDA MADNESS
PRESENTING A LIVE TRIBUTE TO THE SPECIALS AND MADNESS
SAT 31 MAY
2 BANDS
2 TONE
1 FANTASTIC NIGHT

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Sofia Liñares. © Perou.

Director Carlos Acosta

On sale now!

2025-26 Season

Black Sabbath – The Ballet
The Nutcracker
Don Quixote
Sir Peter Wright Centenary
20th-Century Masterpieces

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